THE
Morning-Exercise
AT
CRIPPLE-GATE:
OR, SEVERAL
Cases of Conscience
PRACTICALLY RESOLVED
BY SUNDRY
MINISTERS.

——*Commending our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God*, 2 Cor. 4. 2.

Unicuiq; est liber sua conscientia, & ad hunc librum discutiendum & emendandum omnes alii inventi sunt.
Bernard. de Inter. Dom. *p.* 1072. *c.* 28.

Οὐδεὶς γὰρ ὕπως ἔστε μάρτυς ὅτι φοβερὸς, ἔστε καταπληκτικὸς δεινὸς, ὡς ἡ σύνεσις ἡ ἐγκατοικοῦσα ταῖς ἐκάστων ψυχαῖς. Polyb. Frag. p. 1029.

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The Names of the MINISTERS, and the CASES Reſolved.

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Mr. Hill

Mr. Hill	16.	*In what things muſt we uſe moderation, and in what not?* Phil. 4. 5.
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Mr. Simmons	21.	*How may we get rid of Spiritual Sloth, and know when our activity in duty is from the Spirit of God?* Pſal. 119. 37. ult.
Dr. Wilkinſon	22.	*Wherein are we endangered by things lawful?* Luk. 17. 27, 28.
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Mr. Whitaker	25.	*How are we compleat in Chriſt?* Col. 3. 11, ult.
Mr. Jackſon	26.	*How ſhall thoſe Merchants keep up the life of Religion, who while at home enjoyed all Goſpel-Ordinances, and when abroad are not only deſtitute of them, but expoſed to perſecution?* Pſal. 120. 5.
Mr. Brumhall	27.	*How is Hypocriſie diſcoverable and curable?* Luk. 12, 1.
Mr. Clerkſon	28.	*What muſt Chriſtians do that the influence of the Ordinances may abide upon them?* 1 Chron. 29. 18.

HOW

To my moſt unfeignedly *Beloved* Pariſhioners of *St. GILES Cripplegate.*

My Dear Friends,

THeſe *Sermons*, both *Preached* and *Printed*, are the meer product of love to your *Souls*. I never yet (that I remember) went thorow the *Pariſh* without *ſome* (though not *ſutably compaſſionate*) heart-aking *yearnings* towards my *charge*, to think (and oh that I could think of it according to the *worth* of *Souls*) how many *thouſands* here are *poſting* to Eternity, that within a few years will be in *Heaven* or *Hell*, and I know not how ſo much as to *ask* them *whither* they are *going*. While God continues me your *Watchman*, I ſhall affectionately deſire, and ſolicitouſly endeavour to keep my ſelf *pure from the blood of all men*, and that not only for the ſaving of my own Soul, by delivering my Meſſage; but that you alſo may be ſaved by entertaining it. I am willing therefore to commend unto you ſome *legible* provocations to *ſerious* Piety, and therefore have procured a *contribution* of help, that *in the multitude of* Spiritual *Counſellors* your Souls may have *ſafety*. In ſhort, my Brethren, give me leave to ſay, that if I had but the *Apoſtles* Graces to help me in the *manner*, I can (without boaſting) at preſent uſe the *matter* of his Spiritually-paſſionate expreſſions;

Acts 20. 26.

Prov. 11. 14.

Phil. 1. 8, 9, 10, 11. That *I greatly long after you all, in the bowels of Jesus Christ. And this I pray, that your love* to truth and holiness *may abound yet more and more, in* saving *knowledg, and in all* sound *judgment. That you may* practically *approve things that are excellent*; and *that you may be sincerely* gracious, and universally *without offence till the day of Christ.* That you may be *filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.* These (my Beloved) *are and shall* be (through Grace) the *constant* desires and *restless* endeavours of

Novemb. 14. 1661.

Your most Affectionate Soul-Servant,

Samuel Annesley.

THE

How may we be univerſally and exactly Conſcientious?

Acts XXIV. 16.

And herein do I exerciſe my ſelf, to have always a Conſcience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

THis Sermon is but *preliminary* to ſome *ſelect* caſes of *Conſcience*. And in this Text you have a notable *Anatomy* of Conſcience, wherein are theſe ſix things ſingularly conſiderable:

1. Here's the *Index* to the book of Conſcience: The *Eye* to the *portraiture* of a Chriſtian, that according to your ſeveral ſtandings looks upon the *Buſineſs*, the *Time*, the *Manner*, and the *Cauſe* of this account.

Herein a] in *this*, i. e. in this *Buſineſs* b, q. d. here I am arraign'd as a Malefactor, charged with Sedition, Schiſm, and Hereſie, in this my Conſcience acquits me. *Herein do I exerciſe*, &c. Again,

Herein] in or *at* this *time* c, q d. 'Tis but five days ago ſince I was ſlapt in the mouth for this defence, and I ſee thoſe preſent, that ſo raſhly and illegally cenſured me; yet now before more equal Judges, I bring the ſame defence. *Herein I exerciſe my ſelf*, &c. Again,

Herein] in this *manner* d, q. d. *My manner of life from my youth, which was at the firſt among mine own Nation at Jeruſalem, know all the Jews, which knew me from the beginning (if they would teſtifie) that I lived after the ſtraiteſt ſect of our Religion* e: And I am not conſcious to my ſelf of any crime in reſpect of their Law, either in my *Judaiſm*, or *Chriſtianity* f: or thus,

Herein] q. d. *I have hope towards God* —— *that there ſhall be a Reſurrection of the dead, both of the juſt and unjuſt; and therefore with me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgment: yea, I judg not mine own ſelf, for I know nothing by my ſelf, yet I am not hereby juſtified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord* h. And therefore having

a Ἐν τούτῳ.
b *In hoc*, Vulg. Eraſm.
c *Interea*, Bez. i. e. ἐν τούτῳ χρόνῳ, De Dieu.
d *Æthiopic. ſic*, i. e. ἐν τούτῳ τρόπῳ, De Dieu.
e Acts 26. 4, 5.
f *Tirin. in* Acts 23. 1.
g Syr. Arab. *propterea*. Sic τοῦτο, De Dieu. verſe 15.
h 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

an eye to the resurrection, and last judgment *i*, *I exercise my self to have*, &c.

2. Here's the *Act* with the *quality* included, [*I exercise* k] I am musing and exercising my mind: I am learning and busying my thoughts. The word also notes industry and endeavour, pains and labour *l*; q. d. this is my meditation, my study, my work and employment to *get*, to *keep*, and *use*, a Conscience void of offence, *&c.*

3. Consider the *Subject* of this exercise [*my self* m] 'twas himself, not only his hearers; he took on him the *care of all the Churches*, but he would not have it charged upon him, that he kept others Vineyards and neglected his own *n*: he would be sure so to exercise himself, that he might not by any means, *when he had preached to others, himself be a cast-away* o.

4. Consider the *Object* of this exercise, and that is [*Conscience*] and *p* pray consider the manner of expressing himself [*to have a Conscience*] to be owner of a good Conscience *q*. All men have a Conscience, but we may say of most, Conscience hath them: they have a *Conscience*, as they have a *Feaver*, or a disease; Conscience is troublesome and disquiets them, they cannot sin so freely, as if they had no inward gripes, and therefore they had rather be rid of their Consciences, than be thus troubled with them. But now the Apostle he would have a Conscience to commune with, he would do nothing but what he is willing his Deputy-Judg shall approve of.

5. Consider the *Quality* of the Subject [*void of offences* r] i.e. without any thing which will not endure the scrutiny of both divine and humane judgment *s*. The distribution notes the entireness, exactness, and excellency of his Gospel-carriage, in his *Religion* towards God, and in his *Conversation* among men *t*. He made it his business to live *purely* before God, and *righteously among men*.

6. Consider the *Continuance* of this exercise [*always* u] 'tis not only by fits and starts, when in some good mood, or under some pangs of conviction; 'tis not only when arrested by sickness, or affrighted by the apprehension of death, but always, at *all times*.

The words thus opened, the General Case that lies upon me to resolve, is this:

How may we be universally, and exactly conscientious?

Universally, in respect of *things*; *exactly*, in respect of *manner*.

To answer this, (so far as I can crowd it into a Sermon) I shall present you with these four things. 1. What *Conscience is*. 2. What it's *Objects*. 3. What it's *Offices*. 4. What are the *Kinds* of Consciences: Wherein various *directions* are necessary for *remedies* and *rules*, which when laid together will resolve the Case.

1. *Conscience is man's Judgment of himself* x, *i. e. of his estate and Actions* y, *as they are subjected unto the Judgment of God.* I therefore close with this description to wave the determination of that School-dispute, whether it be an *Act* z, or an *Habit* a, whether of the *Understanding* b,

i *Propterhoc*, i.e. *propter hanc fiduciam*, Grotius.

k ἀσκῶ *meditor*, and sometimes the same with παιδεύω, Budæus.

l *Operam do, elaboratè concinno, orno, colo*, Steph.

m Ἀσκεῖν *utitur Paulus significatione conjugationis Heb. Hithpahel*, Bez.

n Cantic. 1.6.

o 1 Cor. 9. 27.

p συνείδησιν ἔχειν.

q *Kath.* against lib. of cons. p. 1.

r Ἀπρόσκοπον

s Vatab. *in loc.* τῇ τελείᾳ γὰρ αὐτῇ ἀρετῇ, Chrys. *in loc.*

t Calv. *in loc.* Διὰ παντός *i. e.* διὰ παντὸς χρόνου, Pis.

Case
The Description.

x *Ames. de consci.* l. 1. c. 1. p. 1.

y *Voet.* Sel. disp. par 3. p. 827.

z *Durand.* l. 2. dist. 39. p. 441. *Aquin* 1. qu. 79. art. 13. p. 147.

a *Sanderson de Oblig. conf. præl.* 1. Sect. 17. p. 21.

b *Plerique referunt ad intellectum. Bald. case conf.* l. 1. c. 3. p. 5.

or

or *Will* c, or *both* d; whether it be a diſtinct *Faculty* e, or *Power* f, how far *born* with us, and how far *acquired* g. I willingly let paſs all *h*, that doth not further the deſign I drive at, *viz.* an univerſal and exact conſcientiouſneſs.

c *Ibidem.*
d *Breſſ. de conſ.* l. 1. c 6. p. 23.
e *M. Bern.* Treat. of Conſc. p. 4.
f *Huit* upon Conſc.

g *Sand. ib.* p. 23. h *Imprimis obſervandum eſt, tantam eſſe virium mentis nempe potentiarum, habituum, & actuum, inter ſe naturæ cognationem, támque arctam quoad uſum & exercitium conjunctionem, ſive connexionem, ut non ſolùm vocabulorum appellationes, ſed & reales ſingulorum proprietates, & officia, reliquis promiſcuè & indiſcriminatim attribui ſoleant; idque non in exotericis tantùm poetarum, oratorum, aliorúmque humanioris literaturæ authorum, (quibus licentiùs loqui permiſſum eſt) ſed & in dogmaticis Philoſophorum & Scholaſticorum ſcriptis——Idem eodem p. 9.* and in the laſt Paragraph of that Lecture, *abſolvi tandem——certe obſcuriùs quàm aut voluiſſem, aut debuiſſem, ſi res aliter tuliſſet——Profectò intricata eſt & perplexa omnis (quod viri graviſſimi jam olim conqueſti ſunt) de animæ intellectivæ potentiis & facultatibus diſquiſitio——quæ capere ſe putant, & quidem ſuo modo capiunt illiteratiſſimi quique homunciones; hæc ipſa non capiunt acutiſſimi philoſophi——qua in re nequeo ſatis admirari Dei Opt. Max. infinitam Sapientiam, retundentis hoc pacto humanam ſuperbiam, & repræſentantis mortalibus, velut in ſpeculo, inanem illam δοκησοφίαν, quæ ſibi videntur aliquid eſſe, cum nihil ſint, miſerè decipientes cor ſuum*-----p. 35, 36.

For *Conſcience*, the Hebrews ordinarily make uſe of two words, *viz.* [*Heart*] and [*Spirit*] [*Heart*] in Prov. 4. 23. *Keep thy Heart* i, *i. e.* keep thy Conſcience, *with all diligence*; and ſo in the New Teſtament, 1 *Joh.* 3. 20. *if our Heart* k, *i. e.* if our Conſcience *condemn us:* [*Spirit*] in *Prov.* 18. 14. *A wounded Spirit* l, *i e.* a wounded Conſcience, *who can bear?* and ſo in the New Teſtament, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11. *What man knoweth the things of a man, ſave the Spirit* m *of man, i.e.* the Conſcience of Man *that is in him.* But in *Engliſh* (as alſo in the *Greek* n, and *Latin* o, whence we borrow it) 'tis called [*Conſcience*] knowledg with another, which excellently ſets forth the Scriptural nature of it, as *Job* 16. 19. *My witneſs is in heaven*, and *Rom.* 9. 1. *I ſay the truth-----my Conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt.* In both places, *q. d.* God witneſſeth with my Conſcience *p.* Conſcience is placed in the middle, *under* God, and *above* man *q.* I will cloſe this with *Brochmand's* deſcription of Conſcience *r*, to be *a kind of ſilent reaſoning of the Mind, whoſe definitive ſentence is received by ſome affection of the heart, whereby thoſe things which are judged to be good and right, are approved of with delight, but thoſe things which are evil and naught, are diſapproved with grief and ſorrow. God hath placed this in all men, partly to be a judgment and teſtimony of that integrity to which man was at firſt created, and of that corruption that followed ſin; partly that God may have a Tribunal erected in the breaſts of men to accuſe delinquents, and to excuſe thoſe that do what is good and right.*

i לבב *cor tum.* k καρδία.
l רוח
m πνεῦμα.
n συνείδησις.
o Conſcientia.
p *Sanderſ. ibidem, & poſtea ſparſim.*
q *Perkins* Vol. 2. l. 1. p. 11.
r *Brochmand.* T. 1. Art. 1. c. 3. q. 2. p. 7.

2. The *Object* of Conſcience is very *various*, Conſcience hath great *employment*, and much *buſineſs* with the whole man, and with all his *actions:* 'tis like thoſe living Creatures in the *Revelation* all over eyes; it looks to the *Underſtanding* t, whether our wiſdom be carnal or gracious; to the *Will* u, whether it go beyond, or fall ſhort in ability of good performances; to the *Affections* x, whether the entertainment or refuſal of the Goſpel be the matter of greateſt joy or ſorrow. It pries into all our *Actions* both towards *God* and *man*. Towards *God*, whether in *general* our *eſtate* be *good* y; in *ſpecial*, whether our *ſervice* be inward and z *ſpiritual*, or only outward *a* and *formal*. More particularly, it ſurveighs all our duties, whether we *pray* in faith *b*;

s Mr. *Bernard. of conſ.* p. 56. & ſeqq.
t 2 Cor. 1. 12.
u Rom. 7. 18.
x Rom. 9. 1, 2.
y Heb. 9. 14.
z 2 Tim. 1. 3.
a Heb. 9. 9.
b Heb. 10. 22.

whether we *hear* with profit *c*; whether through our *Baptiſm*, we can go unto God as unto an *Oracle* d; whether in the Lords Supper we have ſingular *Communion* with Chriſt *e*: in ſhort, whether we *do* and *will* ſtick cloſe to *Religion* f; as knowing, that if *Conſcience* do not ſteer right, Religion will be *Shipwrackt* g. Thus duties towards *God* are the *great* object of Conſcience, but duties towards *man* are the *Secundary*, and like unto it. Towards man in our *whole* converſation *h*. Particularly, that we be *obedient* to Rulers *i*, (and that which is in one place charged upon us for *Conſcience* ſake, is in another place commanded for the Lords ſake *k*:) in ſhort, that we *be juſt* in all our dealings *l*, avoiding all juſtly offenſive things *m*, words *n*, thoughts *o*; that we expreſs ſingular charity *p*, eſpecially to ſouls *q*, and this in prayer *r*, when we can do nothing elſe: and Conſcience doth not only do all this at *preſent* urging to duty, or ſhooting or tingling under the commiſſion of ſin, but it foreſees things *future*, provoking to good, and cautioning againſt evil; and alſo looks *back* upon things paſt with joy or torment, ſo that it is eaſier to reckon what is not the object of conſcience, than what is: in a word, *Every thing of duty and ſin is the object of Conſcience.*

3. The *Offices* of Conſcience are likewiſe *various*. In *General*, the proper office of Conſcience is *diſcurſively* to apply that light which is in the mind unto particular actions, or caſes. The light which is in the mind is either the light of *Nature*, or the light of *Divine Revelation*. By the light of *Nature*, I underſtand thoſe common notions which are written in the hearts of men, which (as a brand pluckt out of the common burning) are the reliques of the Image of God after the fall. Not only Scripture, but experience, evidenceth, that thoſe which are practical Atheiſts, *that ſay unto God, depart from us* s, *we deſire not the knowledg of thy ways*, yet cannot get rid of his Deputy, their Conſcience: they carry a Spy, a Regiſter, a Monitor in their boſom, that doth accuſe and trouble them, they cannot ſin in quiet *t*. Thoſe that are *without* or *reject* the Sun-ſhine of Scripture, yet they cannot blow out Gods *Candle u* of Conſcience. By *Divine Revelation* I mean both the ſtanding-rule of Scripture *, and Gods extraordinary *x* diſcoveries of himſelf, whether by dreams or viſions, or Propheſies, or other Spiritual communications; all which, though (if they be from God) they are according to Scripture *y*, yet the former are afforded upon particular *z* Providences, & the laſt are the univerſal priviledges of particular favourites *a*: But it is the *Office* of Conſcience to apply all theſe, & that it doth by the diſcourſe of a practical Syllogiſm *b*, e.g.

c 1 Tim. 3. 9.
d 1 Pet. 3. 21. *Interp.* 72. *vocabulo* ἐπερωτᾶν *utuntur quando in* V.T. *Iſraelitæ dicuntur interrogare os Domini—— Baptiſmus eſt* ἐπερώτημα *— reſponſio bonæ conſcientiæ, & etiam interrogatio apud Deum, quia audet cum fiducia deum accedere & interrogare, hoc eſt, cum eo colloqui cùmq; rogare pro ſe & aliis*, Gerhard. l. c. T. 4. *de Sacram.* p. 180. Sect. 88.
e 1 Cor. 10. 15, 16. *f* 1 Pet. 3, 15, 16.
g 1 Tim. 1. 19.
h Act. 23. 1.
i Rom. 13. 5.
k 1 Pet. 2. 13.
l Heb. 13. 18.
m 1 Cor. 10. 29.
n 1 King. 2. 44.
o Pſ. 73. 15, 16.
p 1 Tim. 1. 5.
q Rom. 9. 1, 2.
r 2 Tim. 1. 3, 4.
s Job 21. 14, 15.
t *Quod egi in corpore hoc poſtmodum importunâ cogitatione verſo in mente*: Bern. *de inter. dom.* c. 30. p. 1074.
u Prov. 20. 27.
* Iſa. 8. 20.
x Numb. 12, 6, 7, 8. Heb. 1. 1.
y 1 Joh. 4. 1. *z* 2 Chron. 20. 14. 1 King. 13. 20, 21. Numb. 24. *per totum.*
a 2 Cor. 12. 2, 3, 4.
b *Syrus* Clav. Reg. l. 1. c. 3. p. 4.

& multoties gravius torqueor in recordatione quàm prius captus fueram operis perpetratione,

c Joh. 3. 39.
d 1 Cor. 12. 2.
e Joh. 20. 28.

Whoſoever believeth c, (*i. e.* accepteth of Chriſt as Lord *d*, and Saviour) *ſhall be ſaved, but* (may the gracious perſon ſay) *I accept of Chriſt as Lord and Saviour* e. *Therefore ſhall I be ſaved.*

Or thus. *Whoſoever is unfeignedly willing to have his actions brought to the Scripture-touchſtone to be tried, whether they be right for the matter, and to the Scripture-Ballance to be weighed, whether they are weight for the manner, his deeds*

deeds are wrought in God, i. e. he is in a ſtate of Grace, he acteth by the gracious aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God *f*.

But (may the trembling ſoul ſay) *I deſire nothing more than to bring my ſelf and all my actions to a Scripture-trial* g.

Therefore (he may conclude) *I am in a ſtate of Grace* h, *&c.*

Once more. *Whoſoever committeth ſin* (*i. e.* makes a trade of Sin) *is of the Devil* (*i.e.* is the Child of the Devil.)

But (may every unregenerate perſon ſay *k*) *I make a trade of ſin, i.e.* when I am a ſinning I am in my Element, I am where I would be, there is no work ſo pleaſing to me.

Therefore I am the Child of the Devil l, *i. e.* I am in a ſtate of Damnation.

In the (*major* or) firſt propoſition, you have the *dictate* m of Conſcience. In the (*minor* or) ſecond propoſition, you have the *Teſtimony* n of Conſcience, and in the *Concluſion*, you have the *judgment* of Conſcience *o*. In the firſt *the power* of Conſcience is *very great*, ſo great that it can do any thing *but* make evil good *p*, for it can make an *indifferent* action good or evil *q*: and it can make a *good* action evil *r*: therefore in things *neceſſary* it doth ſo bind, that no humane Laws can looſen *s*, and thereupon we are ſaid to be down-right *debtors* t, engaged *ſervants* u, ſpiritually *bound* †, lovingly *conſtrained* x, graciouſly *neceſſitated* y: Yea, in a word, we can do no other (unleſs we will offer violence to our Conſciences) than do what God chargeth upon us as duty z. Thus far the *dictate* of Conſcience. In the *Teſtimony* of Conſcience, Conſcience examines, ſifts, and tries our actions; this in Scripture is called a *returning* into a mans own heart *a*, a *thinking* of our ways *b*, a *ſpeaking* to our heart *c*, a *laying* things to heart *d*, a *ſetting* our heart upon a buſineſs *e*, an *examination* and trial of our ſelves *f*; and thence the concluſion is inferred from the premiſſes according to our apprehenſion of the rule and account of our actions. Yet this is worthy of *ſpecial* obſervation, that though both the premiſſes be *undeniably* true, yet there's nothing more *ordinary*, than for not only wicked *g*, but gracious perſons (though upon different grounds) to deny the *concluſion*: and the truth is, without the Spirits aſſiſtance by way of *conviction* to the wicked, and *relief* to the godly, neither of them will prove any better *Logicians*, than ſtill to deny the *concluſion*. Graceleſs perſons they will not conclude againſt themſelves: For, 1. They will not weigh the *cogency* of any Scriptural *h* argument. 2. They have *ſucke* in other ſelf-flattering concluſions *i*: and 3. they are willing to put a *cheat* upon themſelves *k*, ſo theſe will not conclude againſt

f Joh.3.20,21. *g* Pſl.139.23,24. *h* Pſal.26. 1, 2. *i* Joh. 3. 8. *k* Rom. 6. 20. *l* Rom. 6. 16. m *Habituales cognitio menti impreſſa, variè ab authoribus nuncupatur, ut conſcicutia, conſcientiæ dictamen, lex naturalis, ſcintillationis, συνλήρησις, &c.* Eſtius in 2. l. Sent. diſtinct. 39. Sect. 2. P. 427. n *Conſcientia reſpectu propoſitionis, dicitur lumen & lex; reſpectu aſſumptionis & concluſionis, teſtis; ſed reſpectu aſſumptionis aptiſſimè vocatur index vel liber; & reſpectu concluſionis maximè propriè judex*, Ames. de conſcien. l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. Sect. 9. o *Propoſitionem dictat* συνλήρησις. *Aſſumptio per appropriationem vocatur* συνείδησις. *Concluſio eſt ipſa κείσις.* Ibidem Sect.

10. *p* Ibidem *Thyſes Theol. de Conſ.* p.44. Sect. 18. *q* Martinius de verb. conſ. *s* Act.4.19. *Vix credideris apud ſe fuiſſe* Stapletonum *cum hæc effutiret. Forum conſcientiæ dixit eſſe longè majorem partem clavium.* Cham. panſt. T. 2. l.11. c.9. p.205. Sect. 23, *t* Rom. 1. 14. *u* Rom. 6. 16. † Act. 20.22. *x* 2 Cor.5.14. *y* 1 Cor.9.16. *z* Act.4.20. *a* 1 King.8.47. *& reverſi fuerint ad cor ſuum ex heb.* Pſal.19.59. *c* Hoſ. 7. 2. *d* Jer.12.11. שם על-לב *ponens ſuper cor*, *e* Hag.1.5. there 'tis שימו לבבכם על-דרכיכם, *ponite cor veſtrum ſuper vias veſtras.* *f* 2 Cor. 13. 5. there's both πειράζετε (q.d. make as ſtrict a ſcrutiny into your own hearts, as the Devil will do when he tempts you) and δοκιμάζετε (be as loath to be miſtaken in your Graces, as an Uſurer in his Coyn.) *g* Rom. 2. 18, 21, 22. *h* Joh.3.20. *i* Deut. 29. 19. *k* Jam. 1.22. παραλογίζεσθαι *falſâ argumentatione uti & ſubdolâ ſupputatione fallere*, as thoſe in Mat. 7. 21, 22, 23. *Broch.* in loc.

them-

themſelves. And on the other hand; gracious perſons *dare* not conclude themſelves ſo happy as the Scripture repreſents them. 1. Through the prevalency of *Temptations* l, Satan frights them from their comforts 2. Through the *abounding* of grace *m*, they think 'tis too good to be true; eſpecially conſidering, 3. their ſence of *unworthineſs* n; what! *they* paſs a ſentence of abſolution upon their ſouls! of approbation upon their actions! No, they dare not, through over-modeſty they'l belie the very Spirit of grace. In ſhort, the only *remedy* I ſhall commend to both ſorts is this, *viz.* Beg of God to perſwade thy heart to cloſe with convincing truth, q. d.

Lord thou haſt told me in thy word, that if I come unto Chriſt, I ſhall in no wiſe be caſt o *out: and if I love God, I may thereby be ſure that God loves me* p.

But Lord, ſo far as I am able by ſearching to know my own Heart, I deſire nothing more than to come q *to Chriſt, to receive Chriſt* r, *to be one with* s *Chriſt, to be conformable to Chriſt* t. *And Lord, I dare ſay with* Peter, *thou that knoweſt all things, knoweſt that I love thee*; u *if prizing thee above all things in the world* w, *if reſtleſs longing* x *for further acquaintance, and more inward* y *communion*; *if pantings after the ſecrets of thy* z *preſence, and fear of nothing more than to offend thee* a, *be infallible evidences of ſincere love, then I dare appeal unto thee, that I love thee.*

Therefore Lord perſwade my ſoul thankfully to acknowledg, that 'tis in a ſafe condition. On the contrary, Thus:

Lord thou haſt told me, that if I live after the fleſh, I ſhall b *die.*

But my heart and life undeniably evidence, that I mind nothing but carnality: Therefore Lord convince me, that there's but a ſtep c, *but a* d *breath between me and everlaſting death.*

Thus Chriſtians, do but *ſuffer* and *help* your Conſcience to do its *office*, and then *ſhall you have rejoicing in your ſelves alone, and not in* e *another, i. e.* you will find cauſe of rejoycing in the teſtimony of your own Conſcience, and not in others thinking you to be better than you are, nor in your thinking your ſelves to be better than others. Thus you have the *Offices* of Conſcience. I come in the laſt place to ſpeak of

4. The *kinds* of Conſcience I know are commonly reduced to theſe four, *viz. Good and quiet*; *Good and troubled: Evil and quiet*; *Evil and troubled.*

But intending the reſolution of the *Caſe* before me in ſpeaking to Conſcience under the ſeveral *kinds* of it; I ſhall ſpeak to eight kinds of Conſciences. The two firſt, *viz.* the ſleepy and the feared Conſcience are peculiar to the worſt of men. The four next, *viz.* the erring, doubting, ſcrupulous and trembling Conſciences are almoſt indifferent to good and bad; only the two former have a greater *byas* to bad: and the two latter have a greater tendency to good: but the two laſt kinds, *viz.* The good and honeſt, and the good and quiet Conſciences are peculiar to Gods choiceſt favourites. In treating of theſe, I ſhall endeavour to acquaint you with the nature of each g, how to cure the evil, and how to obtain the good; and hereby the Application will be entwiſted with the Explication throughout my diſcourſe.

1. The firſt, and one of the worſt kinds of Conſciences in the world, is the

l Rev. 12. 10. The Devil accuſeth them to themſelves, as well as unto God day and night.
m Pſal. 126. 1.
n Luk. 7. 6, 9.
o Joh. 6. 37.
p 1 Joh. 4. 19.
q Jer. 3. 21.
r Joh. 1. 11.
s Gal. 2. 20.
t Heb. 2. 11.
u Joh. 21. 17.
w Pſal. 73. 25.
x Pſal. 119. 20.
y Pſal. 106. 4.
z Pſal. 25. 14.
a Pſal. 119. 120
b Rom. 8. 13.
c Job 21. 13.
d Pſal. 146. 4.
e Gal. 6. 4.
f *Bern. de conſc.* p. 1107.

g But here I muſt ſay with *Aug. Non poſſum ut volo explicare quod ſentio: tamen quid moliar dicere, peto ut non expectatis verbis meis ſagaciſſime ſi poteſtis intelligatis—Odi deſinire—nam facilius eſt mihi videre in alterius definitione quod non probem, quam quicquam bene definiendo explicare.* Aug. T. 1. l. 2. de Ord. c. 1. 2. p. 671.

1 The ſleepy Conſcience.

the *ſleepy Conſcience*; ſuch is the Conſcience of every unconverted perſon *(that is not yet under horror)* their h *ſpirit, i.e.* their *Conſcience* is aſleep; that as bodily ſleep bindeth up all the ſenſes and animal ſpirits, ſo this ſpiritual (or rather unſpiritual) ſleepineſs, bindeth up the ſoul from all ſenſe *i* of the evil of ſin, and want of grace, and therefore in converſion Chriſt doth awaken *k* the Conſcience. The Diſciples of Chriſt have their ſpirits waking, when their bodies *l* are ſlumbring, *i.e.* they have a gracious *habit* of watchfulneſs, when they are overtaken with ſome carnal *acts* of ſleepineſs. Chriſt complains of unkindneſs *m*, that his Spouſe ſleeps in the morning, when he knocks for early entertainment; but the unconverted let Chriſt ſtand knocking all the day, till ſupper-time *n*, they will ſpend their day with their luſts; and if Chriſt will knock and wait till the day of their life be almoſt ſpent, then they'l pretend to open: but how long muſt God call? How *long* o *wilt thou ſleep O ſluggard? when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?* and they'l anſwer, *Yet* p *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep.* The plain truth is, though wicked men cannot quite *ſtifle* their Conſciences *q*, yet their Conſciences do but as it were *talk* in their *ſleep*, and they take no more notice of them, than they do of their *dreams*.

h Rom. 11. 8. πνεῦμα κατανύξεως. Ἔξις ἢ ἕξις---quaſi πνεῦμα κατανυγμένον, Camerarius in loc.

i *Privatio omnis ſenſus & judicii*, Illyr. *in præd. loc.*

k Epheſ. 5. 14.

l Mat. 26. 41.

m Cant. 5. 2.

n Rev. 3. 20.

o Prov. 6. 9, 10.

p *Conceſſio ironica ethopœiam habens pigrorum elegantiſſimam*, Jun. in loc. *Videmus conſcientiam velati veterno aut lethargo aliquamdiu ſepultam*, &c. Epiſc. Inſt. theol. lib. 1. cap. 3. pag. 11.

Cauſes of a *ſleepy* Conſcience are (beſides the ſluggiſhneſs of our depraved natures) *Cauſes.*

1. A ſpiritual *intoxication*: all unconverted perſons are *drunk* with the *love* of ſin, and therein behave themſelves like *Solomons* r drunkard that lies down to ſleep in the *heart* of the ſea, or upon the top of a *maſt*, in the very midſt of the greateſt *ſoul-danger*. He doth that daily which *Jonah* did once, run away from God, and then compoſeth himſelf to ſleep, *s* when God is purſuing him with judgments; and dreams of nothing but impunity, and happineſs. Love of ſin is the Devils *Opium* whereby he caſts the Conſcience into a dead ſleep, that no arm but of Omnipotency can waken it. He meets with ſomething in the world, which he likes better than the holy ways of God, and therefore will not ſeek God *t*, Gods ways are always *grievous to him*,——*he hath ſaid in his heart I ſhall not be moved*——*God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will never ſee it*---------*he contemns God, and ſaith in his heart, thou wilt not require it*. They wink, and then conclude God doth not ſee them.

r Prov. 23. 34, 35. *Jacet in corona charcheſii*, i.e. *Galea ubi maxima ſentitur maris agitatio*, Jun. in loc. or as the Vulg. *Verſion*, which may ſerve for a paraphraſe, *quaſi ſopitus gubernator amiſſo clavo*, i.e. *uſu rationis*, Tir.

s Jonah 1. 5.

t Pſal. 10. 4, 5, 11, 13. *Juſtitiam ut ille apud Platonem Thraſymachus, appellat* γενναῖαν εὐήθειαν, *elegantem ſtulticiam*——they ſleep, and then *aiunt deum dormire aut oblitum eſſe eorum quæ fiant in terris*, &c. Aug. Steuch. Eug. Enar. in loc.

2. *Carnal conceits of Grace and Heaven.* At the beſt, humane wiſdom is their higheſt *Guide*, their great and ſupream *Oracle*; in their miſhapen apprehenſions of their need of mercy, they are willing to be flattered, that it may be had without ſuch ſeverities in Religion *u*, as they are unwilling

u *Quàm minutatim & pedetentim deſcliuet à Deo: & ita in profundum deſcendat, ut ſuper eam urgens puteus os ſuum mundi proſperitas alludat & illudit, cum laudatur peccator in deſideriis animæ ſuæ, cum peccantium favor & peccare nolentium pavor nolens & dolens arridet ei*, &c. Bernard. lib. de conſ. pag. 1109.

to

† Mat. 7. 13, 14.

x *Non dicit, pauci ingredientur quod difficilium, ſed pauci inveniunt*, Par. in loc.

y *Vide* Auth. imperf. oper. Hom. 18. p. 72.

z Mat. 11. 12.

a Luk. 13. 24. *vide* Stell. in loc.

b See *Abernethy's* Phyſick for the Soul. c. 7. p. 92, &c.

to undertake. *Why ſhould they be wiſer than their Neighbours? all men are not fools. Men as wiſe, and as learned, neither preſs nor practiſe ſuch ſtrictneſs; and do you think they have not a care of their ſouls? they do not doubt but they ſhall do as well as the beſt.* Though, poor ſouls, they know *that wide is the gate, and broad is the way † that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat; becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* Mark that, [*that find it*] he doth not ſay x that *enter* into it, but that *find* it. Thoſe that do not walk in the way of holineſs y, 'tis impoſſible they ſhould ever find it. The gate doth not lead to the way, but the way to the gate. Do not think to get to Heaven firſt, and learn heavenly-mindedneſs after; yea, Heaven muſt not ſuffer z violence; ſtriving is the condition a of entering. Rouze up therefore, and ſhake off your worldly-wiſdom b, your ignorant ſelf-love, your abuſe of mercies, your contempt of God, and your forgetfulneſs of Death and Judgment. But how ſhall we do this?

Cure.

1. The firſt Remedy I ſhall commend, is *Conſideration.* Let the ſubject of thy conſideration be what thou wilt, (only I could wiſh it may relate to eternity, whither thou art poſting) and I ſhall not doubt of the ſucceſs. Let me for once inſert a relation I heard between the preaching and the tranſcribing of this Sermon. *The Father of a Prodigal left it, as his death-bed charge, unto his only Son, to ſpend a quarter of an hour every day in retired thinking, but left him at liberty to think of what he would, only engaged him to ſpend a quarter of an hour in thinking. The Son having this liberty to pleaſe himſelf in the ſubject, ſets himſelf to the performance of his promiſe; his thoughts one day recal his paſt pleaſures, another contrive his future delights; but at length his thoughts became inquiſitive, what might be his Fathers end in propoſing this task: he thought his Father was a wiſe and good man, therefore ſurely he intended and hoped that he would ſometime or other think of Religion: When this leaven'd his thoughts, they multiplied abundantly, neither could he contain them in ſo ſhort a confinement, but was that night ſleepleſs, and afterwards reſtleſs, till he became ſeriouſly religious.* O that I could perſwade you to go and do likewiſe.

2. Obſerve what *means* thou ſhunneſt as too *ſtartling*, and make uſe of them for thy *awakening*. This, with the bleſſing of God, will ſavingly awaken thee. O how often hath thy Conſcience *whimper'd*, and thou haſt *huſht* it to ſleep again! What doth thy ſleepy Conſcience moſt dread, an awakening *Miniſtry*? So far croſs thy Conſcience as to attend no other: Inſtead of *lullaby* Notions, improve *cutting* * Convictions.

* Tit. 1. 13. ἔλεγχε ἀποτόμως redarguito præcis è, Bez. *Gentilis ejuſdem religioſi ordinis, qui ut ſuos hortaretur, nè minus conſcientiæ ſtuderent quàm ſcientiæ; dixit majores ſuos, ſe vitámque ſuam direxiſſe conſcientiâ: nunc autem abbreviatum videri verbum iſtud, ac mutilatum primâ ſyllabâ, viz. ſuccedente illi ſcientiâ; verendum deinceps nè & hoc verbum mutilatur primâ ſyllabâ, adeóque relinquatur ſola entia rationis, circa quæ verſatur ſæpe ſpeculativa tantum ſcientia, ac nudæ ſpeculationes.* Breſter. de conſc. l. 1. c. 7. p. 28. Sect. 57.

The Seared Conſcience.

* 1 Tim. 4. 2.

II. The *ſecond kind* of Conſcience propoſed, is, The *ſeared Conſcience*. Such is theirs who have given up their names to Chriſt, but lift up their heel againſt him, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks *, *having their conſcience ſeared*

with

with an hot iron, i.e. having a corrupt and † putrified Conſcience, that have the Devils *brand-mark* * upon it. Plainly, a *ſeared Conſcience*, is a *rotten* †, *venomous, ulcerate, peſtilent, filthy, gangrenate Conſcience*, that doth not perform any of its Offices, but is even paſt feeling; that is, (or might have been) in Chriſt's Hoſpital, under cure of Soul-diſtempers: but through indulging of ſin, not being able to endure the ſharp * convictions, bitter reproofs, and cloſe exhortations of the Word, he deadens his Conſcience unto an inſenſible ſenſleſneſs. To this rank of profligate ſinnners I refer all thoſe that *frequent* (as well as thoſe that *reject*) Ordinances, that *make* a profeſſion (as well as thoſe that *hate* the profeſſion) of Religion, yet have a reſerve of ſin, which they will not part with. Searing (you know) is of that part which needs cure.

† *Corruptam & putrefactam atque putredinem cum fœtore ſemper emittentem.* Anſel. in loc.

* *Cauterio diaboli penetratam eſſe, ut indelebiliter eandem retineant conſcientiam,* &c. Cajet. in loc.

† Abern. *ibid.* c. 8. p. 105.

The *Cauſes* of a ſeared Conſcience, are, *Conſcience-waſting* ſins on man's part procuring it, and divine *withdrawing* from the ſinner on God's part, inflicting it. As there are ſome * bodily Diſeaſes that follow bodily wickedneſs, ſo this Soul-diſeaſe is the peculiar puniſhment of ſins againſt knowledg. Methinks that Text is dreadful †: *As they did not like to retain God in their knowledg, God gave them over to a reprobate mind,* &c. 'Tis obſervable *, the oftner they rebelled againſt the light, the more ſeverely God puniſhed them; with that (which they counted) impunity, *viz.* he gave them up to their ſwinge † of 1. Natural luſt. 2. Unnatural, and 3. Of all unrighteouſneſs. Cuſtom of ſinning takes away Conſcience of ſinning.

Cauſe.

* *Morbus venereus.*

† Rom. 1. 28. See alſo v. 21. 24, 26.

* *Ecce quotiens vindicat Deus & ex eadem vindicta plura & graviora peccata conſurgunt.* Bed. in loc. † —*Tradidit Deus*—*ſubſtractione gratiæ*—*traditione in poteſtatem Satanæ*—*εἰς ἀδόκιμον νοῦν, in mentem reprobam, activè & paſſivè intelligendo*, &c. And all this to be ſuch a recompence of their error, *ἂν δεῖ quam oportuit*, i. e. *quam ex ordine juſtitiæ ſuæ Deus ipſis debeat retribuere.* Par. in loc.

For *Cure.* Seriouſly ſet your ſelves againſt thoſe *peculiar* ways of ſinning which have brought you to this. You *know* them, there's not any one that hath a *ſeared* Conſcience, but he *doth* (or eaſily may) know how it came ſo; your work (in ſome reſpect) is not ſo large as in caſe of the ſleepy Conſcience, 'tis but one or two ſorts of ſins that are *eminently* miſchievous to your Souls in this caſe, though a ſeared Conſcience is worſe than a ſleepy Conſcience; yet as it is more eaſily diſcernable, ſo 'tis but reaſonable you ſhould more ſpeedily and vigorouſly ſet upon the cure: take heed of accounting any ſin ſmall *, leſt at laſt you account not any ſin great. I will commend one Text to you, and cloſe this particular, *Ezek.* 24. 13, 14, *In thy filthineſs is lewdneſs, becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more, till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee: I the Lord have ſpoken it, it ſhall come to paſs, and I will do it, I will not go back, neither will I ſpare, neither will I repent,* &c. Sirs, God hath been your *Phyſician*, hath uſed variety of Remedies: If nothing will prevail, but you will induſtriouſly *ſinge* your Conſciences to make them *ſenſleſs*, as ſure as God is *true*, he will * make you *ſenſible* of your ſin by everlaſting burnings.

Cure.

* *Cum cœperit quis dicere; quid eſt ſi verbulum hoc unicum locutus ſum ero? — Ex hoc, quid id, quid illud — Senſim incipit quis pedetentim in majora & graviora prolabi, & ſic deinceps — inper-*

I forbear inlargement, becauſe in the following caſes about the *Mortification*

fectam insensibilitatem decidit ——curate levia, quoad levia sunt —— & virtutes & peccata à parvis incipiunt, &c. Dorotheus B. P. T. 4. p. 726. *——*Instar medici, qui putridis non parcit carnibus ——non parcit, ut parcat : crudelis est, ut misereatur.* Hieron in loc. * My fury to rest [i. e. *Non habeat, quod amplius faciat*, &c. Sanctius in loc.

fication of beloved lusts, about *relapses*, and how to check the first *risings* of sin, you will have suitable directions to make your brawny Consciences tender. I proceed therefore to those kinds of Consciences, none else will I speak to, *viz.*

The Erring Conscience.

* *Amesius de conscient.* l. 1. c. 4 p. 8.

* Dickson *Therap. Sac.* l. 1. c. 1. p. 3. sect. 18.

* Bergius, *Prax. cath. dissert.* 3. p. 244. sect. 27.

III. *An erring Conscience* * is that *which judgeth otherwise than the thing is.* Conscience is sometimes deceived through *ignorance* † of what is *right*, by apprehending a false rule for a true, an error for the Will of God: Sometimes through *ignorance* of the *fact*, by misapplying a right rule to a wrong action. Conscience evil-informed, takes humane traditions, and false doctrines, proposed under the shew of divine Authority to be the Will of God. A famous instance you have of this in *Jeroboams* * case, he fears that if the people should go up to sacrifice at *Jerusalem*, then he should lose his Kingdom; this puts him upon enquiry, whether there should not be a double *Sanctuary*, as well as a double *Kingdom?* hereupon a Council is called, flattering Prophets come, they have dreams and visions, worthy of their affections, suitable to their purpose: A decree is made, *q. d.* 'Tis sufficient that you have hitherto gone up to *Jerusalem*, now behold your gods; these Calves are like the Cherubims of the Sanctuary, which are as ministring Spirits before the face of God. (That these Calves had the shape of the Cherubims, you may gather by comparing of Scriptures, that which is called the face of an † *Oxe* in one place, is called the face of a * *Cherub* in the other). This seems to the people a satisfying warrant for them readily † to *follow* the Kings *Commandment*. I might add another instance of the good old Prophet, who was *plausibly* seduced to his bodily * destruction. Now 'tis a great question (among the *Papists* especially) *whether, and how far an erring Conscience binds?* One of their most learned *Casuists* that I meet with, peremptorily determines, that the law of an erring Conscience is not dispensible by † God himself: Others *, that 'tis good to follow an erring Conscience, when it hath the credit of a good Conscience, and is agreeable to reason. *Others* x, that a right, and an erroneous Conscience, both bind, though in a different respect; a right Conscience, as it is *conformable* to the Law of God; an erring Conscience, as it is thought to be the Law of God: a right Conscience binds *simply*, an erroneous upon a *supposition*. *Some* distinguish ignorance into y vincible and invincible, and say, That when an *erroneous Conscience*, through invincible ignorance, judgeth that to be honest which is not so, yet that judgment is the next rule which the will is to follow. *Others* distinguish (where all men are not able to discern the difference) between z *binding* and *obliging*. But in short,

† Ezek. 1. 10.
* Ezek. 10. 14.
& Ezek. 1. 7.
† Hos. 5. 11.
* 1 King. 13. 8, 18, 19, 24, 26.
† *Ne quidem à Deo, multò minùs ab homine.* Bresser. *de Conf.* l. 5. c. 22. p. 555. sect. 212.
* *——utigitur bonum sit agere secundum Conscientiam erroneam voluntariè & vitiosè, oportet existimationem Conscientiæ bonam esse, & cum recta ratione congruentem.* Azorius *Mor. Instit.* l. 2. p. 104.

x Sayrus *Clav. Reg.* l. 1. c. 4. p. 8. Sect. 13. y *Quando Conscientia erronea ex invincibili ignorantia judicat aliquid honestum esse, quod honestum non est, tunc actus voluntatis, qui conformis est tali judicio, bonus & honestus est, etiamsi contingat objectum esse turpe : ità passim Theologi ; & probatur, quia tunc est conformis suæ regulæ, nam illud judicium est proxima regula quam sequi debet voluntas.* Becan. T. 1. *Theol. Schol.* P. 2. Tract. 1. c. 4. q. 7. p 219. z *——Neminem obligat tamen ligat——* Durand lib. 2. dist. 39. q. 5. p. 443. Sect. 7.

they

they generally determine the queſtion in the affirmative: Though ſome grant, that though *b* we muſt do nothing againſt a true Conſcience, yet we muſt depoſe an erroneous one, and go contrary to it. And others *c*, though we muſt do nothing againſt Conſcience in any caſe, yet we muſt not follow Conſcience in every caſe. The plain truth is, *Error* cannot bind us to follow it *d*; an erring Conſcience may ſo bind, that it may be a ſin to go againſt it; but it can never ſo bind, as it may be a *virtue* to follow it. To follow an erring *e* Conſcience, is for the blind ſinner to follow his blind Conſcience, till both fall into the ditch. The violation of Conſcience is always evil, and the following of an erring Conſcience is evil; but there's a middle way that's ſafe and good, *viz.* the informing of Conſcience better by God's Word, and the following of it accordingly.

b Sylveſtranus in l. 1. Sent. p. 239.

c *Nihil licet contra Conſcientiam agere in aliquo caſu, nec tamen tenetur quilibet ſequi Conſcientiam ſuam in quolibet caſu*, Guil. Pariſienſis *de vitiis & pec.* p. 280.

d *Harris* Works, Pt. 4. p. 28.

e *Robinſ.* Obſ. c. 47. p. 216.

Cauſes.

The *Cauſes* of an erring Conſcience (beſides Original ſin, the effect whereof is blindneſs in the Underſtanding, and the juſt judgment of God upon perſons for not entertaining, obeying, and loving the truth, as it is in Jeſus; beſides theſe, the cauſes) are reduceable to theſe three Heads *.

* Breſſer. l. 5. c. 23. p. 556. Sparſim.

1. *Negligence of learning the will of God* †, through ſlothfulneſs, and love of eaſe, and low eſteem of the ways of God. I need name but one Scripture for both proof and illuſtration of this particular, *Eccl.* 4. 5, 6. *The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own fleſh. Better is a handful with quietneſs, than both the hands full with travel and vexation of Spirit*; q. d. He is a fool that puts himſelf into a poſture of idleneſs *, that compoſeth himſelf to do nothing, that thinks it better to be without good things, than be at ſome trouble in getting them †.

† *Diſcendi negligentia, orta ex pigritia.* Ibid. Sect. 217.

* Engliſh An.

† *Pemble* in loc.

2. *Pride whereby a man is aſhamed to conſult others, and to be taught by them* *. Thoſe that are ſincerely conſcientious are not free from a kind of *proud modeſty*, in being *ſhie* of making inquiry into practical caſes; there's ſomething of pride in their *baſhfulneſs* to diſcover their ignorance, *in asking of queſtions for Conſcience-ſake*. But thoſe that are ungodly, arrogate ſo much to their own judgment, that (to ſpeak their own boaſting) they know as much as any man can teach them. But as wiſe as they are, a wiſer than they calls them † *fools*, and their folly miſleads them.

* ——*Pudeat ignorantem alios conſulere, & ab iis doceri.* Breſ. ibid.

† Prov. 28. 26. *Qui ſuo fidit animo ſtultus eſt.* Merc. *in loc.*

3. *Paſſion, or inordinate affection* * about that whereof we are ignorant. This warpeth our conſideration, for *he that ſeeks truth with a byas, will run counter when he comes near it, and not find it, though he come within kenning of it* †.

* Breſ. *ibid.* &c.

† Arch-Biſhop Laud. E. Ded. before the relation of the Conference.

Cure.

You may gather the *Remedies* from the *oppoſites* to theſe three cauſes of error. 1. Be induſtriouſly diligent to know your duty. 2. Be humbly willing to receive inſtruction. And, 3. Let not your affections outrun your judgment. But there's *one* rule I ſhall commend, which if you will *conſcientiouſly* improve, you ſhall never be *much* hurt by an *erring* Conſcience; and I dare appeal to your own Conſciences, that 'tis your

indiſpenſable duty, you *muſt* uſe it, and 'tis ſo plain and eaſie you *may* uſe it.

Do what you know, and God will teach you what to do. Do what you know to be your *preſent* duty, and God will acquaint you with your *future* duty as it comes to be *preſent*. Make it your buſineſs to avoid *known omiſſions*, and God will keep you from *feared commiſſions*. This *Rule* is of great moment, and therefore I will *charge* it upon you by expreſs Scripture, *Pſal.* 25. 4, *Shew me thy ways, O Lord*, i. e. thoſe ways wherein I cannot err *n*. *Teach me thy paths*, i. e. that narrow path which is too commonly unknown *o*, thoſe Commands that are moſt ſtrict and difficult, *v.* 5, *Lead me in thy truth, and teach me*, i. e. teach me evidently that I may not be deceived; ſo teach me, that I may not only know thy will, but do it *p*. Here's his *prayer*, but what grounds hath he to *expect audience? For thou art the God of my ſalvation*, q. d. thou Lord wilt ſave me, and therefore do not refuſe to teach me. *On thee do I wait all the day*, i. e. the whole day, and every day *q*. Other Arguments are couched in the following verſes, but *what* anſwer? *v.* 9, *The meek will he guid in judgment, the meek will he teach his way*, i. e. thoſe that ſubmit their neck to his yoke, thoſe that are not conceited that they can guide themſelves better than he can guide them, he will teach them his ways *r*, in *neceſſary, great*, and *weighty matters* they ſhall not *err* *ſ*. Again, *Prov.* 2. 3, *If thou cryeſt after knowledg, and lifteſt up thy voice for underſtanding.* v. 4, *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures.* v. 5, *Then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledg of God.* v. 6, *For the Lord giveth wiſdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledg and underſtanding.* v. 7, *He layeth up ſound wiſdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.* v. 8, *He keepeth the paths of Judgment, and preſerveth the way of his Saints.* v. 9, *Then ſhalt thou underſtand Righteouſneſs, and Judgment, and Equity, and every good Path*: q. d. Be but as diligent to get knowledg, as a covetous man is to get money *t*, and God will certainly give you ſuch knowledg of his ways, as ſhall preſerve you from error *u*, and will teach you how to behave your ſelves both towards God and Man *x*. One Scripture more, that in the evidence of three Witneſſes, this Rule may be eſtabliſhed, *Joh.* 7. 17, *If any man will do his will, he ſhall know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of my ſelf*, q. d. Hinder not your ſelves from learning truth through fear of error *y*, for you ſhall never want the Spirits guidance, while you practically follow his conduct *z*.

n *Mandata tua oſtende, quæ me non permittant errare*, &c. Remig. in loc.

o *Semita dicta quaſi ſemi via, quia anguſto calle dirigitur, nec vulgo nota eſt, ſed occulto itinere ambulatur.* Eruno in loc. B.P.T. 11. p. 96

p Remig. *ubi ſup.*

q Arnob in loc.

r *Non eos qui præcurrere volunt, quaſi ſeipſos melius regere poſſint, ſed eos qui non erigunt cervicem, neque recalcitrant.* Aug. in loc.

ſ *Ejuſmodi error nunquam accidit, vel certe non permanet; de rebus neceſſariis, magnis, & gravibus* —— Bergius *prax. Cath. p.* 247.

t Cartw. in loc.

u —— *Dominus clypeus erit iis, qui perfectam, & omnibus ſuis numeris conſtantem contemplationis rationem in hiſce reconditis diviniſque rebus amplexi ſint, quo ab erroribus tuti ſerventur*, &c. Levi Gherſom. *in loc.*

x Eng. Annot.

y —— *Quàm perperàm & ſtultè hodie permulti, dum errandi periculum metuunt, hâc trepidatione ſeſe impediant ab omni diſcendi ſtudio —— ſi Deo toti in obſequium ſimus addicti, ſpiritum diſcretionis ab eo nobis datum iri ne dubitemus qui perpetuus ſit dux ac director*, &c. Calv. *in loc.*

z Gul Pariſien. *Qui expreſſe docet —— ubi eſt invincibilis ignorantia quoad nos Deus ſuccurret, niſi culpâ noſtrâ ejus opem a nobis avertamus —— quæ ſententia facit maximè ad providentiam Dei celebrandam.* Davenant *determ.* q. 45. p. 213.

The doubting Conſcience.

IV. *A doubting Conſcience is that which with much trouble and anxiety ſuſpends* * *its judgment, not knowing which way to determine.* Doubtfulneſs

* Brochm. T. 1.

of

of Conſcience is that ambiguity of mind which conſiſts in a ſtanding (or rather in a wavering) ballance, neither aſſenting nor diſſenting *b*. To ſpeak ſtrictly, a *doubting* c Conſcience is no Conſcience, but only improperly, as a dead man may be ſaid to be a man. Conſcience is a *judgment* of ſomething *done*, or *to be done*: but now where there's no *aſſent*, there's no *judgment* c, but a *privation* of judgment; and therefore ſo far as it may be called a Conſcience, it is an *evil* Conſcience, at beſt *troubleſomly* d evil, and therefore ought to be depoſed. Some term the acting upon a *doubting* Conſcience, to be an acting *beſides* e *Conſcience*; for they cannot be ſaid to act *according* to Conſcience, becauſe 'tis properly none, but *æquivocally*; nor do they *act againſt* Conſcience, becauſe Conſcience permits them to act thus, and no otherwiſe: thoſe act with or againſt Conſcience, where the judgment of Conſcience is determined, to ſay this is lawfull or unlawful; and he acts *beſides* Conſcience, who remains fluctuating and doubting, whether ſuch a thing be lawful or unlawful, and yet doth, or omits it. Now the Apoſtle tells us *f*, *Whatſoever is not of faith is ſin.* By Faith there we muſt underſtand that *perſwaſion and ſecurity of mind*, whereby we *believe* and *determine*, that ſuch a thing *pleaſeth* or *diſpleaſeth* God, is lawful or forbidden; 'tis not ſpoken of juſtifying *g* Faith, as if men ſinned in eating or not eating, becauſe their ſins *were*, or were *not* pardoned. In ſhort, in all Duties that belong to practice, we muſt be *unweariedly* diligent to perceive the truth, that doubtfulneſs may be driven away; for the more *certain* knowledg we have of thoſe things we do, the more *confident* we may be in the doing of them, and the more *joyful* afterwards. What therefore is the cauſe of doubting, that it may be baniſhed?

The *Cauſes* of doubting, which I ſhall ſpeak of briefly (to ſay nothing of our ignorance *i* and weakneſs) are theſe two.

1. Either *want* *k*, or *equality* of Reaſons; that when we *poyze* and *weigh* things moſt *impartially*, yet we are not able to come to a *determination*, but the mind is ſtill in *ſuſpence*.

2. Doubts ariſe from ſome *peculiar* Reaſons. *General* Reaſons are not *ſufficient* to make a *conſcientious* doubt; there muſt be *intention* of mind upon ſome *particular* reaſons that muſt be *duly* weighed, elſe we may be ſaid to *doubt* of what we ſcarce think of. They have not ſo *good* as a doubting Conſcience, (and that's a bad one) whoſe doubts lurk in *generals*, who have only ſome *cloudy* notions from *without*, or *foggy* miſts from *within*, which they take no *due* courſe to clear. Too many deal with their *doubts*, as *Cripples* with their *ſores*, which might *eaſily* be healed, but they make them a *begging* Argument; ſo the *formal* Hypocrites have *always* their *doubts* and *fears* (like the *Lapwings*, cry far enough from her Neſt) about things *general*, or of *leſſer* moment, which they might *eaſily* anſwer, and employ themſelves in things more profitable. Shall I tell you *how*? You cannot expect I ſhould reſolve the almoſt *infinite* particulars

b *Conſcientia dubia, ſtrictè negativè magiſque propriè, nil eſt aliud quàm ambiguitas, ſive ſuſpenſio animi conſtituti in æquilibrio*, &c. Breſs. l. 4. c. 1. p. 350.

c Breſs. *ibid.* ſect. 5. *Vox* dubia *conſcientiæ addita fit diminuens ceu alienans, haud aliter quàm ens rationis ens dicitur*, &c. Voetius pt. 3. p. 828.

d ——*Sinon malitia turpi, ſaltem triſti.* Voet. ibid.

e *Præter conſcientiam*—— Konig. *de conſc. vid.* p. 13, 14.

f Rom. 14. 23.

g *Minus ἀκριβολογοῦσι qui fidem iſtam explicant de fide juſtificante, & ſalvifica*, &c. Konig. *ibid.*

i I ſpeak of *practical* doubts, for of *Speculative*, that proverbial ſaying of *Æneas Silvius* is undeniably true; *Cui plura nôſſe datum eſt, eum majora ſequi dubia.* Platina *de vit. Pont. Pij.* 2di. p. 308. k Voet. *Sel. diſp. pt.* 3. p. 828.

l *Quot modis poſſit accidere conſcientia dubia?* Reſp. *Tot modis poſſe, quot ſunt generaliter quæſtionum.* Azorius *Inſt. Mor.* l. 2. c. 18. p. 135.

culars of *doubtful* cases; but I'le propose *two* Remedies, which, with the blessing of God upon the conscientious improvement, will give you *light* for *smoak*, in things both *Sacred* and *Civil*.

Cure.

1. About *lesser* matters this rule commonly holds good, *viz.* m *In things doubtful, take the safest course.* In things doubtful *ordinarily* one way is *clear*, take that, *e.g.* I question whether such a *recreation* be lawful, but I am sure 'tis not *unlawful* to let it alone; therefore to prevent the *after-reckonings* of Conscience, I will not meddle with it: but *n* this will not reach all cases; therefore,

m *In dubio practico eligenda est via tutior ex præcepto scilicet naturali. Est certa & revera communis.* Bress. *ibid.* l. 4. c. 6. p. 371. sect. 45. *n* 'Tis generally taken to be safest to take that way (in things controverted) wherein differing parties agree, but that is not always a good rule. See Arch-Bishop *Laud*'s Conference, p. 288. & seqq. *In multis particularibus non tenetur homo partem tutiorem sequi:* Sayrus *clav. reg.* l. 1. c. 13. p. 31. sect. 9.

2. *Bring the case to a point, wherein the stress of your doubt lies*; but be sure it be a case of *Conscience*, not of *interest*, or *prejudice*, but a case of Conscience, such as you are *unreservedly* willing to be resolved in, that you can in prayer (as it were) bring God a *blank* to write what he pleaseth. And 2. Pare off all those *whibling* demurs, and *carnal* reasonings, which may *puzzle*, but can never *satisfie* you. These things premised, 3. Write down your case as *nakedly* as you can, with the *grounds* of your hæsitation: in your writing, make two *Columns*; on the *one* side write those Reasons you judg cogent, [*for*] on the other side the reasons you judg of moment [*against*] that whereof you doubt: *compare* these together, and *poize* them *impartially*, you will find that your *perplexed* thoughts have another *aspect* when *written*, than when *floating*, and that your own *Ink* will *ordinarily* kill this *Tetter*; plainly *your selves* will be able to resolve your own doubts: but if not, this will *ripen* the *boil*, where it doth not *break* and *heal* it, you will be *ready* for advice *. In your *consulting* of others, do it with *expressions* equivalent to those of the Jews to *Jeremy*, (but with more *sincere* affections) *Jer.* 42. ver. 2.----*Pray for us unto the Lord thy God.*-----Vers. 3. *That the Lord thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.*----Vers. 5. *The Lord be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not,* * *according to all things, for the which the Lord thy God shall send thee to us.* Vers. 6. *Whether it be good, or whether it be evil,* (*i.e.* seem it never so disadvantagious or dangerous to us) *we will obey the voice of the Lord our God, to whom we send thee, that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of the Lord our God.* But because we have none can give *infallible* decision, therefore refer your case to those that are likely to give a *different* resolution, and thereby you will see how much is to be allowed to *humane* passion: request them to write the *grounds* of their *Determination*; then *compare* these together, especially the *Scriptures* and *Reasons*. If you cannot out of these collect a *satisfying* resolution, (yet the case will be brought into a *narrower* compass): be *unwearied* therefore to take the *same* course again, apply your selves to the *same* persons, or others; [*one*] case thus *thoroughly* resolved, will be *singularly* useful for the *scattering* of all *future* doubts in *all* other cases. And though this may prove a business of *time*, yet suspend your acting *

* *Vide* Sayr. Clav. Reg. *Ibidem.* sect. 6, 7.

* Jer 42. 5, &c. *Expressius est juramentum quo dicitur, Testis est Deus, quàm quo dicitur, Juro, quia ille explicat rationem juramenti, &c.* Estius in loc.

* *Contra legem charitatis in Deum facit is qui cum dubium animum habeat, nihilominus operatur—actus ad sui bonitatem, rectam cognitionem rei agendæ requirit & postulat.* Azor. Instit. mor. l. 2. c. 18. pag. 135. † Joh. 20. 25, 27. * Phil. 3. 15, 16.

till

till you are ſatisfied: though the *duty* in queſtion be of *greateſt* moment, yet while you can approve your heart unto God, that 'tis neither *love* of ſin nor *eaſe*, 'tis neither ſlighting of *Chriſt* nor *duty*, but a *reſtleſs* inquiſitiveneſs to know *Gods* mind in the caſe, your *ſuſpence* (at the *worſt*) will be reckoned among your *infirmities*, and be *compaſſionately* overlookt. Can there be any thing of *greater* moment, than to doubt of Chriſts *Reſurrection?* yet while *Thomas* † doubted meerly for want of *evidence*, Chriſt graciouſly condeſcends in a *non-ſuch* manner to give him *ſatisfaction*. To conclude this, *whereto* * *ye have already attained, walk* by *rule* exactly; *and if in any thing you be* doubtfully *minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you.*

V. *A ſcrupulous Conſcience, is that which doth determine a thing to be lawful*†, *yet ſcarcely to be done, leſt it ſhould be unlawful.* There's ſome *anxiety*, *reluctancy*, and *fear* in the *determination*. A *ſcruple* in the *mind* is as *gravel* in the *ſhoo*, it vexeth the *Conſcience*, as that hurts the *foot*. A ſcruple is a *hovering* kind of fearfulneſs, ariſing from *light* † Arguments that *hinder* or *diſturb* the Soul in performances of Duties.

† *Statuit rem aliquam eſſe licitam, ſed ideo in effectum minùs deducendum, quia ſcrupulus aliquis, qui anxiam reddat conſcientiam, ne forſitan res iſta ſit illicita,* Konig. de conſ. p. 14. * *Scrupulus diminutivum à ſcrupus, lapillus eſt qui in calceo. Hinc metaphoricè ſignificat ſimilem affictionem animæ ſeu conſcientiæ,* 1 Sam. 25. 31. *non erit——in ſcrupulum cordis,* &c. Breſſ. de Conſ. l. 6. c. 1. p. 562. † Ames. *Ibidem* pag. 16.

The difference between a *doubting Conſcience* and a *ſcrupulous Conſcience* is this; A doubting Conſcience, aſſents to neither part of the queſtion; a ſcrupulous Conſcience, conſents but with ſome vexation.

I ſhall name but *two* Cauſes (forbearing to mention our *ignorance* and *pride*) which have a *great* influence upon all kind of *Error*, *Doubts*, and *Scruples*.

Cauſes.

1. The firſt cauſe of ſcrupulouſneſs is *natural* *, *viz.* a *cold complexion*, which is always *timorous*; thoſe that are *Phlegmatick* and *Melancholy*, are naturally fearful; and the reaſon is, that through the defect of natural heat, the ſpirits about the heart are as it were *congealed*, and the heart it ſelf is *ſtraitned*; whence by way of *ſympathy*, the imagination hath *ſad* apprehenſions of things, and ſuch perſons are *puſillanimous* and fearful.

* *Scrupulus—— vel melancholia vel ſuccuſa enatus——* Konig. ibid. p. 15.—*Item ex ægritudine & infirmitate ——ex nonnullis cauſis quæ cerebrum exſiccant, ut ſunt jejunium, vigiliæ, &c.* Sayr. cl. reg. l. 1. c. 14. p. 42.

2. The ſecond and the *chief* cauſe is *temptations*. Satan, if he cannot keep the heart a *ſecure* Priſoner, he'l do his utmoſt to *overwhelm* it with fears and jealouſies, and he ſutes his temptations according to our temper †. He doth not tempt the *riotous* with rewards, nor the *glutton* to the glory of abſtinence; he doth not tempt the *coward* to ſtrive for victories, nor the *paſſionate* to fearfulneſs; he doth not tempt the *melancholy* to ſecurity, nor the *phlegmatick* to great atchievements. *A due conſideration* therefore, *of our natural temper, would mend our ſpiritual.*

† *Singulis hominibus vitiis convenientibus inſidiatur, neque enim facilè captivaret: Si aut luxuriosis præmia, aut avaris ſcorta proponeret: Si aut voraces de abſtinentiæ gloria, aut abſtinentes de gulæ imbecillitate pulſaret; ergò in tentationis ardore calidè ſingulis inſidians, vicinos moribus laqueos abſcondit.* Greg. mor. l. 29. c. 14. p. 161. b.

1. The firſt *remedy* I ſhall commend to you, is this, *viz. Be not diſcouraged*

ged with your scruples: 'Pray' keep off from the other extream, do not *indulge* them, they *naturally* tend to much *spiritual* damage: They 1. are occasions of sin. 2. They render the ways of God more strait, horrid, and impossible, 3. They retard the work of Grace. 4. They hinder chearfulness in the service of God. 5. They quench the Spirit. 6. They unfit us for any Duty. These may all serve for Arguments to strive against them: But yet, be not discouraged, for God is pleased through *over-powering* grace to make good use of them. 1. To further mortification. 2. To restrain us from worldly vanities. 3. To abate pride, and promote humility. 4. To make us more watchful. 5. To make us strive to be more spiritual. 6. To (little less than) *force* us to live more upon Christ: but you must take the *other* rule, if you would have these benefits.

* Vide *Bress.* l.6. c.2.—5.

2. *Do what possibly you can to get* * *rid of your Scruples: but if you cannot get rid of them, act against them.* 'Tis not only *lawful*, but *necessary* to go against a scrupulous Conscience, or you will *never* have neither *grace* nor *peace.* Should a Christian forbear *praying*, or *receiving* the Sacrament, every time his scrupulous Conscience tells him, he had better *wholly* omit the duty, than perform it in *such* a manner, you would soon find to your sorrow, the *mischief* of your Scruples; but grace will not leave him to his scrupulous humour. Be resolute therefore, and tell the Devil, *That as you do not perform your duty at his* command, *so neither will you omit it at his* bidding. Do by religious Duties, as they that are afraid to go by *water*, or to go over a *narrow* Bridg, they cease to fear when they have gone *often* over: so by the *performance* of duties, your scrupulous fears will vanish. Act against your scruples, 1. *Positively*, by disputing them down, and opposing their reasons. 2. *Negatively*, by slighting of them, and not hearkning to them. In short, *In all necessary known duties; always do what you can, when you can't do what you would.*

The trembling Conscience.

VI. The *trembling* Conscience is that which is *disquieted* *, and *distressed* with the (apprehended) *hazard* of the *Souls* condition, that doth nothing but *accuse*, and *condemn*, and *affright* the Soul. This, of any, needs least enlargement, for every one that feels it, is rhetorical enough in expressing it.

* *Dorotheus* compares our Consciences to those Pits that *Abraham* digged, and the Philistines stopped them with earth, *Gen.* 26. 50. *Ob peccatum ut in aqua cænosa & turbida, nemo potest in ea vultum suum contemplari.* B.P. T. 4. p. 769.

Cause.

There's a *twin-cause* of a trembling Conscience, *viz.* Sense of *sin* *, and fear of *wrath* †. Never *sin* like mine! never *heart* like mine! never *case* like mine! Such are the constant complaints of a troubled spirit. I meddle not now with that *horror* of Conscience that follows *profligate* * wretches; I shall speak something of it toward the close, nothing now.

* Psal. 51. 3. Psal 40. 12. † Psal 38. 2—8. Psal. 88. 3, &c.

* *Nemo a se, & extra se curret*——*nullus sui asylum habet.* Eus. Nieremberg. *de art. vol.* l. 2. p. 158.

Care.

For *Cure*, I can give but hints. Never keep the Devils Counsel. Break through all carnal Reasonings, to acquaint your selves with some faithful spiritual Physitian, or experienced Christian, that may shew you the methods of

of divine Grace, and what others * have ſucceſsfully done that have been juſt in your condition. This premiſed, * 1 Cor. 10. 13.

1. *Notwithſtanding* (yea in the *midſt* of) your *ſaddeſt* complaints, *Bleſs God for an awakened Conſcience, while there's hope of cure.* It is a good rule, Be not too quick in adminiſtring *comforts*; but we cannot be too quick in provoking * to *thankfulneſs*. If you can at *preſent* be thankful that you are out of Hell, you ſhall e're *long* be thankful for aſſurance of Heaven. This Rule may ſeem ſtrange, but (upon *experience*) its practice will diſcover its excellency. * Read 1 Theſ. 5. 18. with the verſes next before and after.

2. Obſerve, 'tis Gods *uſual* method to bring the Soul through theſe *perplexities* to the moſt *ſolid* ſpiritual peace. *Auguſtine* * excellently expreſſeth his *ſpiritual* conflict, how God followed him with *ſevere* mercy, till he made him inſtant for *thorow holineſs*. God kept him *trembling*, that he might leave *dallying* in ſoul-concernments. Believe it, Chriſtian, God is now *ſtoring* thee with experiences, which will be a uſeful *treaſury* throughout thy life. Therefore, * —*Inſtabat tu in occultis meis Domine ſævera miſericordia, flagella ingeminans timoris & pudoris, nè rurſus ceſſarem jam penè faciebam & non faciebam: —ſentiebam me ab iniquitatibus teneri, & jactabam voces miſerabiles: quamdiu, quamdiu cras & cras? quare non modò, quare non hâc horâ finis, turpitudinis meæ?* — Aug. Conf. l. 9. c. 11, 12.

3. Do but hold on * in the *vigorous* uſe of all means of Grace, and reckon Gods keeping thee from turning thy back upon his ways, when thou haſt no comfort in them, the *ſecret* ſupports he gives, which thou takeſt no notice of; count theſe for *evidences*, that the Spirit is at work in thy heart; and for *pledges*, that he will perfect his own work. *e.g.* Count thy *growing* importunity in prayer, (or ſorrowful complaint for the want of it) a *gracious* anſwer of *that* prayer, which thou thinkeſt is *diſregarded*. Count thy *watching* for a word to *direct* and *ſupport* thee, a *notable* efficacy of that word, which thou counteſt doth thee no good. Count thy *reſtleſs* diſſatisfaction with every thing on this ſide God, to be a *love-token* from God, to aſſure thee that God will be thy *ſatisfying* portion; and in the *interim*, ask thoſe *well-grown* Chriſtians that are now in the *ſpiritually-ſenſible* embraces of divine Love, whether they are not glad that God formerly took that courſe with them, which he now takes with thee, to bring them to theſe joys. Be encouraged therefore, though thou haſt a ſorrowful † Seed-time, thou ſhalt have a joyful Harveſt. * 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Nihil tibi utilius fore ſcias, quàm ut cum profunda quadam ac forti reſignatione teipſum Deo humiliter reſignes in omnibus, quæ tibi evenerint: Sive dulcia ea fuerint, ſive amara, ſive delectent, ſive crucient, ità ut dicere poſſis: O Deus adorande, etiamſi in hac vita iſtaque preſſura ad extremum uſque judicii diem permanendum mihi foret, te tamen haud quaquam deſerere vellem, ſed conſtanter perpetuóque tibi adhærerem*, &c. Thauler. *in hiſtor. vit.* p. 16. † Pſal. 126. 5, 6.

Thus having ſpoken of thoſe kinds of Conſcience that are either *evil* or *troubleſome*, and how to cure them; I now come to thoſe deſirable kinds of Conſcience, that next to *Deity* and Heavenly *Glory*, admit no *hyperbole* in their commendation, *viz.* the good *honeſt* Conſcience, and the good *peaceable* Conſcience, and how to obtain them.

VII. That Conſcience is *good*, in reſpect of its *integrity*, which gives a right judgment of every thing according to the Word of God. I grant, The good honeſt Conſc.

k Rom. 2. 14. *l* Mat. 23.2,3. *m* Rom. 13. 5. *n* *Norma principaliſſima*, &c. Konig. p. 3,4. *o* James 4. 12. *p* Mat. 10. 28.

that the Law of *Nature* binds *k*, *Eccleſiaſtical* Laws bind *l*, and *Political* Laws bind *m*, but the *Word* of God is the *principal* Rule *n*, which *preciſely* binds the Conſcience in regard of its Author *o*; *There is one Law-giver, who is able to ſave and to deſtroy. Fear* p *not them which kill the body, and are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both Soul and Body in Hell.*

Good quiet Conſcience. *q* 1 Cor. 4. 4. *r* Heb. 10. 2. *ſ* 2 Cor. 1. 12. *t* Heb. 9. 14. * *Moulin*, the comfort of a Communicant, *p.* 37.

VIII. That Conſcience is a good *peaceable* Conſcience that excuſeth *q*, abſolveth *r*, and comforteth *ſ* as it ought, that Conſcience that's pacified *t* by the blood of Chriſt, that doth, as *Moulin** relates of a dying man, to whom ſome ſay the Devil appeared, and ſhewed him a Parchment, that was very long, wherein was written, on every ſide, the ſins of the poor ſick man, which were many in number; and that there were alſo written the idle words he had ſpoken, which made up three quarters of the words that he had ſpoken in his life — and his actions digeſted according to the Commandments: Whereupon Satan ſaid, *Seeſt thou? behold thy Vertues, ſee here what thine examination ſhall be:* Whereunto the poor ſinner anſwered, *It is true Satan; but thou haſt not ſet down all; for thou ſhouldeſt have added, and ſet down here below, The Blood of Jeſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all our ſins; and this alſo ſhould not have been forgotten, That whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* But how ſhall we get ſuch Conſciences? Chriſtians, be but perſwaded to practice *theſe* (or *ſuch*) directions, and your Conſciences will *certainly* be right, and *ſeaſonably* be comfortable.

† 2 Cor. 8. 21. *x* Mat. 5. 21, 22, 27, 28. *y* Mat. 22. 37, 38. *z* Rom. 7. 7. *b* 1 Theſ. 5. 22. *c* Proverbs 4. *d* Prov. 7. 8. *d** Οὔτε οἰκία πολυτελὴς, οὔτε χρυσοῦ πλῆθος, οὔτε ἔδεσμα γένους, οὔτε μέγαθος ἀρχῆς οὐ λογῷ χάρις, οὐ δεινότης εὐδίαν παρέχει βίῳ καὶ γαλήνιον τοσαύτὴ ὅσον ψυχὴ καθαρεύουσα πραγμάτων καὶ βουλευμάτων πονηρῶν, &c. Plutarch. περὶ εὐθυμίας, p. 417. *e* Eccleſ. 7. 20.

1. Take heed of *every* ſin †, count no ſin ſmall *x*. *Scrue* up your obedience to *every y* Command to the higheſt. *Ferret* out every ſin to the moſt *ſecret z* corruption. When you have ſet your watch againſt the *firſt* riſings of ſin, beware of the *borders* of ſin, ſhun the very *b appearance of evil.* Venture not upon occaſions *c* or temptations to ſin; thoſe that dare venture upon occaſions, as Children upon the Ice *d*, ſhall find there's *always* danger, *never* any good. Morality it ſelf will teach *d* you this leſſon, to keep clear of evil, if ever you would either *be* good, or *enjoy* it; but ſeeing, as on the one hand, there cannot be *truth* of Grace, and *truce* with ſin, ſo on the other hand, while Grace is imperfect, ſin will *have* (and make us feel it hath) a being. *There's not a juſt man upon earth, that doeth good and ſinneth not e.* Therefore,

f *Peccator omnium notarum cùm ſim, nec ullivei niſi pœnitentiæ natus*, Tertul. *de pœnit.* p. 121. ed. 12.

II. Forthwith ſet upon the *healing* duty of *repentance*, and upon every ſlip into ſin renew it *f*, ſpeedily renew it. O that I could ſnatch you out of your *ſtate* of impenitency, and perſwade you to daily *actual* repentance! To thoſe that are reſolved to delay their repentance, I have ſometimes given counſel ſuitable to ſuch reſolutions, *viz.* The next ſickneſs that ſeizeth upon you, chide it away, tell your Diſeaſe you can't a-while to be ſick; ſay to it as *Paul* to *Fœlix* g, *Go thy way for this time, when I have*

g Acts 24. 25.

I have a convenient ſeaſon I will call for thee. If death ſummon thee, tell it, You will not obey its ſummons, you have other buſineſs to do than to die; you have Eſtates unſettled, and Children unprovided for, and you would repent too before you die, but you can't yet awhile. If this will not ſerve, but die you muſt, charge your ſouls before they go out of your bodies, not to come near the priſon of impenitent perſons; charge your friends to lock up your bodies ſo ſafe, or bury them ſo deep, that all the Angels in Heaven may not be able to drag them to judgment. But alas my brethren! do you not think this wild counſel? and well you may. Yet unleſs you could do ſomething æquivalent to what this counſel amounts to, you are mad to defer your repentance. What! cannot I keep pain from my body, nor the uſe of reaſon in my Soul one minute, and ſhall I continue in my impenitency, that will damn me the very moment of my death? I beſeech you therefore, for your own Souls ſake, that you may not be guilty of the worſt ſelf-murder, *i.e.* ſoul-murder, ſpeedily ſet upon repentance. And thoſe of you that have repented, let your repentance daily ſupplant ſin, by taking it by the heel certainly to lame it, though you cannot take it by the head utterly to kill it. Though we can't be innocent *h*, let's be pœnitent, and be very careful never to return *i* to ſins repented of. That you may be ſerious in both theſe,

h Σοφία πρὼ ἐν βίῳ ἐπανορθώσεως καὶ διὰ τοῦ κοκαθαρμένου ἢ καθαιρόμενον, *&c.* Μέγα κακίας φάρμακον——φυγὴ τοῦ πλαίσματος. Nazianz. T. 1. *orat.* 15. p. 225. 230. *i* *Confeſſio peccati profeſſio eſt deſinendi*, &c. *Hilar.* in Pſal. 137. *p.* 595.

III. Compoſe thy ſelf to live as under Gods eye, live as in the (more than) ſenſible preſence of the jealous God. Remember, all things are naked and bare before him; you cannot deceive him, for he is infinite Wiſdom; you cannot fly from him, for he is every-where; you cannot bribe him, for he is Righteouſneſs it ſelf. Keep therefore freſh apprehenſions of God in your thoughts; ſpeak as knowing God hears you; walk as knowing * God is nearer to you than you are to your ſelves. The † *Lord is with you, while you are with him, i.e.* you ſhall enjoy his favourable preſence, while you live in his awful preſence. There's one *Pſalm*, which 'twere well if Chriſtians would do by it, as *Pythagoras* * by his golden precepts, every morning and evening repeat it: 'tis *Davids* *n* appeal of a good Conſcience unto God, againſt the malicious ſuſpicions and calumnies of men. [Do you but thus præſentiate God unto your ſelves, and God will atteſt your integrity,] *Pſal.* 139. v. 1, *O Lord thou haſt ſearched me and known me*, q. d. O Lord, thou art the heart-ſearching God, who perfectly knows all the thoughts, counſels, ſtudies, endeavours and actions of all men, and therefore mine; *Verſ.* 2, *Thou knoweſt my down-ſitting, and mine up-riſing, thou underſtandeſt my thought afar off*, q. d. thou knoweſt my reſt and motion, and my plodding thoughts of both *o*. *Verſ.* 3, *Thou compaſſeſt my path, and my lying*

* *Talem te præpara, ut tecum adſit Deus: ſit in ore: ſit in corde: ſemper tecum eat: tecum redeat: nec recedat a te. Nunquam ille te dimittet, niſi prior illum dimiſeris, ubicunque fueris, nunquam ſolus eſſe poteris, ſi Deus tecum erit.* Bern. *de int. dom.*

p. 1065. c. 5. & 1091. c. 66. † 2 Chron. 15. 2. *——*Refert* Galenus *receſſiſſe ſe ſub initium & finem cujuſque diei.* Elichmannus, *Epil. Edit.* p. 15. *n* Moller, *in loc.* *o* Eſtius, *in loc.*

down,

down, and art acquainted with all my ways; q.d. thou ſanneſt and winnoweſt me, *i.e.* thou diſcuſſeſt and tryeſt me to the utmoſt *p*. Verſ. 4, *For there is not a word in my tongue, but Lo, O Lord, thou knoweſt it altogether*; q.d. I cannot ſpeak a word, though never ſo ſecret, obſcure or ſubtile, but thou knoweſt, what, and why, and with what mind 'twas uttered *q*. *Verſ.* 5, *Thou haſt beſet me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me*; q.d. Thou keepeſt me within the compaſs of thy knowledg, like a man that will not let his Servant go out of his ſight. I cannot break away from thee, *Verſ.* 6, *Such knowledg is too wonderful for me: it is high, I cannot attain unto it*; q.d. The knowledg of thy great and glorious Majeſty and infiniteneſs, is utterly paſt all humane comprehenſion, *Verſ.* 7, *Whither ſhall I go from thy ſpirit? or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence?* q.d. Whither can I flee from thee, whoſe Eſſence, Preſence, and Power is every-where? *Verſ.* 8, *If I aſcend up into Heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there*; q.d. There's no height above thee, there's no depth below *r* thee, *Verſ.* 9, *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmoſt parts of the Sea*; q.d. If I had wings to fly as ſwift as the morning-light *ſ*, from the *eaſt* to the *weſt*, that I could in a moment get to the furtheſt parts of the world, *Verſ.* 10, *Even there ſhall thy hand lead me: and thy right hand ſhall hold me*; q.d. Thence ſhall thy hand lead me back, and hold me faſt like a fugitive *t*. *Verſ.* 11, *If I ſay, ſurely the darkneſs ſhall cover me: even the night ſhall be light about me*, q.d. Though darkneſs hinders mans *ſight*, it doth not *thine*. In a word, look which way you will, there's no hiding place from God, *Job* 34. 21, 22, *For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he ſeeth all his goings; there is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themſelves*. Therefore, Chriſtians, do nothing but what you are willing God ſhould take notice of, and judg in your ſelves whether this be not the way to have a *good* and quiet Conſcience.

p Ainſw. *in loc.*

q Tirin. *in loc.*

r *Nulla altitudo te altior: nullum profundum te profundius.* Hieron. *in loc.*

ſ *Aurora ſolis prænuncia, momento totum hemiſphærium pervadit.* Menoch. *in loc.*

t *Deducat——tenebit ut ſolent teneri fugitivi.* Sa.

IV. Be ſerious and frequent in the *examination* of your *heart* and *life*. This is ſo neceſſary to the getting and keeping of a right and peaceable Conſcience, that 'tis impoſſible to have either without it. There are ſome Duties and Graces, like thoſe parts of the body, that may ſupply the defect of other parts; or like ſome Drugs in Phyſick, which when they can't be had, ſome of the like nature may ſerve: but this is like thoſe, the defect whereof nothing elſe can ſupply. The Heathens have gropt out this rule by the *Gloworm*-light of Nature. *Pythagoras* gives it as a *Precept* *; and *Seneca* backs it by examples † of *Sextius*, who every night, before he compoſed himſelf to ſleep, asked himſelf, What evil haſt thou this day healed? What vice haſt thou reſiſted? Wherein art thou better? O how ſweet is that ſleep which follows ſuch a recognition of himſelf, who made every night a ſcrutiny into the words and deeds

*Πῶς παρέβην; τί δ' ἤρξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐπράχθη. Pythag. aur. præc. n 42. p. 9.

† ——*Somnus quàm tranquillus, altus ac liber, cum aut laudatus eſt animus, aut admonitus, & ſpeculator ſui cenſorque ſecretus cognoſcit de moribus ſuis? utor hâc poteſtate, & quotidie apud me cauſam dico. Cum ſublatum è conſpectu lumen eſt, & conticuit uxor moris jam mei conſcia, totum diem mecum ſcrutor, facta ac dicta mea remetior, nihil mihi ipſe abſcondo, nihil tranſeo: quare enim quicquam ex erroribus meis timeam, cum poſſim dicere: vide nè iſtud amplius facias, nunc tibi ignoſco,* &c. Senec. *de ira*, l. 3. c. 36. p. 599.

of

of the whole day, he would neither paſs by, nor hide any thing from himſelf; he ſo ript up his faults, that he would not pardon them to himſelf, without a ſelf-charge not to repeat them. Have you gone thus far? Certainly, my Brethren, not to out-ſtrip them is inexcuſable. *It is a ſhame* to ſee the careleſneſs of moſt, that are better acquainted with any thing than themſelves; there are many that know the hiſtories of a thouſand years paſt, and yet cannot tell you the particulars of their own lives; Men well acquainted with the myſteries of Arts and Nature, but utterly ignorant of the ſecrets of their own Souls. How few are there amongſt us, that can ſay with* David† *I have thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy teſtimonies? Nay, we have a thouſand matters to think on all the day long, the night too, the week, the year; but who queſtions with his own heart, What am I? What do I? How live I? Is the courſe I follow good and lawful? Is that which I omit, my duty, or not? Is God my friend? Am I his? What hope have I of Heaven? Say, I die to morrow, to day, this very hour, where is my aſſurance I ſhall be ſaved? What Apologie can I make againſt the accuſations of Satan and my Conſcience? Will Chriſt be mine Advocate, when I ſhall ſtand in judgment?* Have I grace, or have I none? *Do I grow in grace, or do I decay? Am I better this year than I was the laſt? What ſins have I conquered now, that held me in combate then? What graces have I obtained now, that I had not then?* Chriſtians do you do thus? If you do, that is not enough, unleſs you do it frequently, daily. Every evening ere you ſleep review *e* your carriage in the day, what you have *done*, or *ſpoke*, or *thought*, that is but ſo much as *indecent*. Whether your hearts have been *intent* upon Religion, and *indifferent* to the world. Briefly, have ſpecial care of two portions *f*, of your times, *viz.* *Morning* and *Evening*; the morning to *fore-think* what ought to be done, and the evening to *examine*, whether you have done what you ought.

* Pemble. p. 514.

† Pſal. 119. 59.

e Πρὸ τῆς ἀναπαύσεως ἀναχίνεσθαι προσήκει τὸ σωφρονοῦς ἐκάστῳ ὑποστῆναι τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λογισμὸν καὶ τί γέγονε παρὰ τὸ δέον, ἢ ἐνθύμημα τῶν ἀπηγορευμένων, ἢ λόγος ἔξω τοῦ καθήκοντος, ἢ περὶ ἃ προσευχὴν ῥᾴθυμος. Baſil. T. 2. p. 114. *f* Crocius *Synt.* p. 1212. ex aliis.

V. Be *much* in prayer *g*, in all *manner* of *h* prayer, but eſpecially in *ſecret* *i* prayer. Do not non-ſuit your ſelves by the love of *ſin*, and you ſhall certainly be heard when you pray for *Grace* *k*: believe it, Chriſtian, 'tis not thine *inevitable* *l* weakneſs, nor thy *ſenſible* dulneſs *m*, nor thy *lamented* rovings *n*, nor thy *oppoſed* diſtractions *o*, nor thy *miſtaken* unbelief *p*; it is not any, nor all theſe can ſhut out thy Prayers, if thou doſt not *regard* *q* *iniquity in thy heart*; therefore be incouraged, 'tis the voice of your beloved that ſaith *r*, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever you ſhall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing* (to what you might ask) *in my name: Ask and ye ſhall receive, that your joy may be full.* But this and the two next rules will be ſpoken to in the following Caſes, I ſhall therefore but little more than name them.

g Pſal. 109. 4. *h* Eph. 6. 1. *i* Matt. 6. 6. *k* Heb. 4. 16. *l* 2 Cor. 12. 10. *m* Mar. 14. 38, 40. *n* Pſal. 86. 11. *o* Gen. 15. 11. *p* 1 Joh. 5. 12. *q* Pſal. 66. 18. *r* Joh. 16. 23, 24.

VI. Let every action have reference unto your whole life, and not unto

a part

a part only *s*; propoſe ſome end to your ſelves in every thing *t*, and let all your leſſer and ſubordinate ends be plainly reducible unto the great end of your living. The emphaſis of the Apoſtles Exhortation is very great *u*, *Exerciſe thy ſelf unto godlineſs*, q.d. Be as diligent in Religion, as thou wouldſt have thy Children that go to School to be in Learning. Or thus; let thy whole life be a preparation for heaven, like the wreſtlers or combatants preparation for victory. Or thus; ſtrip thy ſelf of all incumbrances that thou mayeſt attend unto piety. Pleaſures may tickle thee for a while, but they have an *heart-aking* farewell. Thou mayeſt call thy riches *goods*, but within a few days what *good* will they do thee? Men may *flatter* thee for thy Greatneſs, but with God thy *account* will be the greater. Therefore *always* mind that, which will *always* be advantage.

s Epiſc *Inſt. Theol.* l.1. c.1. p. 3.

t *Si aliquem exeuntem domo in' errogaveris: quò tu, quid cogitas? reſpondebit tibi: non Mehercule ſcio, ſed aliquos videbo, aliquid agam, ——curſus eſt, qualis formicis per arbuſta repentibus: quæ in ſummum cacumen, deinde in imum, inanes aguntur——domum cum ſupervacua redeuntes laſſitudine, jurant neſciſſe ſeipſos, quare exierint.* Seneca *de Tranquil.* c. 12. p. 685. u 1 Tim. 4. 7. γυμνάζε σεαυτὸν πρὸς ευσέβειαν. γυμνάζειν eſt *propriè exerceri in gymnade.* Grot. *in loc.*

VII. Live more upon *Chriſt* than upon *inherent* Grace. Do not venture upon ſin becauſe Chriſt hath purchaſed a pardon, that's a moſt horrible and impious *abuſe* of Chriſt: For this very reaſon there was no ſacrifice under the Law for any wilful wickedneſs, leſt people might think they knew the price of ſin, as thoſe do that truck with Popiſh Indulgences and Pardons. But that none may be overwhelmed with the over-ſenſe of their unworthineſs, be it known to you, *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous* *, and our ſalvation is better, ſafer, more for Gods Glory, and our comfort, in his hand than in ours.

* 1 Joh. 2. 1.

VIII. Be every way nothing in your own Eyes *x*; 'tis the humble ſoul that thrives exceedingly, and alas what have we to be proud *y* of? Look we either at our conſtitution, or converſation; our conception ſinful, our birth pœnal, our life toilſome, and our death we know not what; but all this is nothing to the ſtate of our ſoul. A *Stoick* could give this rule, that if any one *z* tell you of anothers ſpeaking evil of thee, do not excuſe thy ſelf, but ſay, he did not know me, or elſe he would have ſpoken worſe. A Convert, when he once comes to be ſenſible of ſin, ſees more cauſe to be weary of his life, than proud of his graces. To riſe and fall, confeſs ſin and commit it; to ſee others out-run us, that ſet out after us; to recover that time for communion with God, which we trifle away in unobſerved impertinencies; Surely for ſuch perſons to be low and vile in their own eyes, deſerves not to be called humility, though the contrary be worſe than deviliſh pride. Be perſwaded therefore to believe of your ſelves in the uſe of *Agars* (ſome ſuppoſe *Solomons*) words of himſelf, *Prov.* 30. 2. *Surely I am more brutiſh than any man*, &c. *q. d.* I do not make uſe of my reaſon, ver. 3. *I have not the knowledg of the holy.* q. d. my knowledg of holy myſteries is very little; in compariſon of my ignorance, nothing. Be as willing that others ſhould ſpeak ill of you, as you are to ſpeak ill of your ſelves: and be as unwilling that others ſhould commend *a* you, as you are to commend your ſelves.

x *Deſcendendo cœlum aſcenditur.* Drexel. *de Præd.*

y *unde ſuperbit homo cujus conceptio culpa, naſci pœna, labor vita, neceſſe mori, quando vel quomodo, vel ubi, neſcire?* Eern. *de inter. dom.* c. 53. *Mallem non eſſe quàm talis eſſe.* Ibid. c. 33.

z *Accuſo me non excuſo, nec idcirco juſtus ſum, quoniam ſi alter ità me accuſaret, ſicut ego meipſum accuſo, patienter juſtinere non poſſem.* Ibid. c. 34, &c. p. 1078.

a Epictetus c. 48. p. 276. Simp. *com.* a *Multos vidiſſe qui potuerint perferre multa incommoda in corpore & fortunis, qui autem potuerit contemnere laudes ſuas neminem.* Luth. T. 4. p. 149. *com. in Gal. exal.*

IX. En-

IX. Entertain good thoughts of God *b* whatever he doth with you, whatever he requires of you, whatever he lays upon you *c*. We never arrive to any conſiderable holineſs, or peace, till we loſe *d* our ſelves in Deity, till our underſtandings be fill'd with admiration; till our wills be, in a ſober ſenſe, divine; till our affections be, in a ſpiritual ſenſe, tranſported. When we can at once unriddle Gods methods of Grace, and make good conſtructions of Gods methods of Providence, making a ſpiritual improvement of both, then we are not far from being univerſally and exactly conſcientious, there's yet one thing wanting, and that's implied in this, but it muſt be eminently expreſt.

b Pſal. 73. 1.

c Τῆς θεὸν τὸν θεὸν εὐσεβείας ἐστὶ ὅτι τὸ κυριώτατον ἐκεῖνο ἐστὶν ἐν θεᾷ ὑπολήψεως θεὸν αὐτῶν ἔχειν, ὡς ὄντων, καὶ θεοπρεπῶν τὰ ὅλα καλῶς, καὶ δικαίως καὶ σαυτὸν εἰς τοῦτο καθατεταχέναι, τὸ πάθεσθαι αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἕκαστα ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς γινομένοις καὶ ἀκολουθεῖν ἑκόντα, ὡς ὑπὸ τῆς ἀϊδίου γνώμης ἐπιτελουμένοις. ἕτω γὰρ ἔστι μέμψη τοῖς θεοῖς, οὐδ' ἀγανακτήσεις, ὡς ἀμελέμενον, &c. Epict. c. 38. Simpl. p. 212. d *Hoc eſt totalem Dei voluntate conformitatem & conſonantiam habere, nimirum, nos totos ei offerendo, ut quodcunque, quandocunque, quomodocunque, ipſe voluerit, de nobis faciat ac ſtatuat; idque ſine ulla exceptione, & contradictione, & nihil prorſus nobis reſervando.* Rodericius *exerc. perfec. pt.* 1. *tr.*8. c.14. p.355.

X. Do all you do out of love to God. Spiritual *love-ſickneſs* is the ſouls *healthfulleſt* conſtitution. When love to God is both *Cauſe*, *Means*, *Motive* and *End* of all our activity in the buſineſs of Religion, then the ſoul is upon the wing towards its reſt. Then *e* is our love to other things regular, when the alone goodneſs of God moves us to love them; as the alone reſpect to health makes me uſe phyſick, the means hath no proper goodneſs diſtinct from the goodneſs of the end; thoſe means which were profitable, though they remain unchanged in themſelves, yet they become unprofitable by the alone change of the end, *e.g.* Health being recovered, phyſick is unprofitable, which while we were infirm was profitable; ſo we are not to love any means without relation to the end, becauſe 'tis contrary to the purity of that love which we owe to God, for we ought ſo to love God, that *with* him, or *under* him, we love nothing elſe, but all things only *in* him, becauſe otherwiſe we do not love him without our whole heart. *e.g.* In mens loving their wives, and wives their husbands; in Parents loving their children, and children their Parents, 'tis a rare pitch to love all theſe in God; that is, to advance our love to God by them, and ſo far as any of them draws off our love to God, to ſay to them as Chriſt to *Peter*, *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an offence unto me.* Love is extended to good: the more good therefore any thing is, the more it is to be beloved: *But thou, O Lord my God,* (ſaith Bradwardine *f*) *art the Good of every good, good above all things that are good, a good moſt infinitely in-*

e Ità ſola bonitas Dei movet ad amorem charitatis erga proximum, ſola ratio ſanitatis movet ad utendum potione medicâ—— omnia quæ voluntati objiciuntur ſint aut finis ant media, hæc ob ſolum finem appeti—— media quâ media dicunt tantùm relationem ad finem, non autem fundamentum ipſius, tum quia contraria eſt puritati amoris, quo Deo inhærere debemus. Ità enim, ut paſſim apud ſolidiores vitæ ſpiritualis magiſtros videre eſt, amare debemus Deum, ut cum illo, etiam ſub illo, nihil aliud amemus; ſed omnia duntaxat in illo: quia aliàs non amamus illum ex toto corde, ſed aliud quidpiam ab illo occupat cor noſtrum. Gibieuf. *de lib. Dei & creat* l. 1. c. 11. p. 66. f *Tu autem Domine Deus meus es omnis boni bonum, ſuper omnia bona bonus, bonum infinitiſſimè infinitum ——quomodo tantum plus amabo te, quàm tu amas me, quantum tu es melior me? debeo amare te finaliter propter te, & omnia alia propter te, tu autem non amas me propter me, nec cætera propter me——debeo etiam amare te infinitè quodammodo intenſivè ſupra quodcunque bonum finitum, tu autem non ſic amas me. Debeo quoque amare te infinite quodammodo extenſivè, volendo ſcil. potiùs quotcunque & quantacunque bona alia, etiam & meipſum non eſſe quàm te, vel quàm te ſemel offendere, tu vero non ſic amas me, quia non debeo ſic amari,* &c. Bradwardin. *de cauſa Dei.* l.2. c.34. p.627. *& ſeqq.*

finita

finite: how much therefore ſhould I rationally love thee? ſhould not my love be proportionably infinite? I would I could ſo love thee: but how ſhall I that am ſo very little and finite love thee infinitely! And yet without ſo loving thee, how will there be kept any due proportion in loving thee, who doſt infinitely exceed all other lovely things? I ought to love thee infinitely as to the manner, though I cannot as to the act of my love, i. e. *I ought to love thee finally for thy ſelf, or elſe I may love thee in ſome ſort infinitely, as to the Act, both intenſively and extenſively; in ſome ſort intenſively,* i. e. *more intenſely, more firmly, more ſtrongly than any finite good, becauſe I love them but for thee; in ſome ſort extenſively, by comparing all things, how many, or how great ſoever with thee, and loving thee before, and above all, that I had rather all things in the world, and my ſelf too to have no being, than once to offend thee. But Lord thou loveſt thy friends in an unſpeakable manner more than they can love thee. O therefore thou great Lord, thou great Good, that filleſt heaven and earth, why doeſt thou not fill my very little ſoul? O my ſoul that art ſo little, ſo miſerable, why doſt thou not open all thy little doors? why doſt thou not extend thy utmoſt capacity, that thou mayeſt be wholly poſſeſt, wholly ſatiated, wholly raviſhed with the ſweetneſs of ſo great love: eſpecially, ſeeing thou art ſo very little, yet nothing leſs will ſatisfie thee! O therefore my moſt loving God, I beſeech thee tell me what may moſt effectually draw out my love to thee, conſidering what prevention of love, what privative, poſitive good things I receive from thee, infinite in greatneſs, infinite in multitude: It is a wonder that any one can think of theſe things, and not be wholly ſwallowed up of love, wholly turned into love: But I ſee Lord, 'tis eaſier to ſpeak theſe things, and to write them down, than to do them. Thou therefore moſt good and moſt powerful Lord, to whom nothing is difficult, give I beſeech thee, that I may more eaſily do theſe things in my heart, than utter them with my mouth: Open, I beſeech thee, thy moſt bountiful hand, and enable me, that nothing may be more eaſie, nothing more ſweet, nothing more delightful, than moſt effectually, and moſt affectionately, to fulfil that which I ſpeak about loving of thee. Lord give me leave a little to preſume above my hope, and to plead with thee about thy magnificent goodneſs: humane friendſhip will not give the repulſe to a poor, wanting, begging friend; O therefore moſt liberal Lord, help me that I may love thee.* Chriſtians, 'tis worth while to make it your buſineſs to climb up to this love-extaſie. This you will find to be a compleating *rule*, an effectual *means*, and a ſingular *exerciſe* of exact conſcientious walking.

I ſhall briefly name (I intended largely to have preſt) two arguments or motives to perſwade the uſe of theſe directions.

1. You cannot poſſibly get rid of your Conſcience[g], therefore be perſwaded to get a good one, there's nothing more common than for wicked men to do what they can to extinguiſh Conſcience; they *flatter* it with carnal reaſoning; they *bribe* it with mock-devotions, they *wound*

[g] *Nec vi extinguitur, nec fraude, adeò altè inhæret animo tu iſſimus*

licèt homo ſit, tamen ſecurus non eſt, ipſas tenebras nequitia, imò tuta omnia timet, multos fortuna liberat pœnâ, metus neminem. Exemplo ſunt potentiſſimi Imperatores, & qui arcani licentiam nacti, ſine arbitris, ſine teſtibus, &c. Epiſc. *Inſtit theol.* p. 1. c. 3. p. 10, 11. *ipſa conſcientia propriis ſtimulis agitur atque compungitur, & ſui ipſa efficitur accuſatrix & teſtis.* Origen. περὶ ἀρχῶν. l. 2. c. 11. p. 707.

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it with hainous provocations, they *fear* it with cuſtomary wickedneſs, they *trample* it under foot by ſinning in deſpight of it; they *run* away from it, and will not endure to hear it, by diverſions; and yet they can ſooner turn their ſouls out of their bodies, than Conſcience out of their Souls: yea, among all theſe indignities, it's as freſh and active, as if it were not thus abuſed, it doth but watch it's opportunity, when it will be heard, when 'twill make that which was done perhaps forty years ago, as if it had been but yeſterday. What ayles the great Emperors of the world *h*, *that cauſe their terror in the land of the living*, what ayls them to tremble with inward Contrition? is it a vain fear? why then do they not ſhake it off? is it the fear of men? no, they are above humane puniſhments: Is it the fear of Shame? no, the ſin perhaps was ſecret, at leaſt man knows not the inward conſternation of their ſpirits. What's the matter? O they are haunted by the fury of their own Conſciences. Would wicked men but blab the gripes they ſometimes feel, even then when they out-face a Miniſterial or friendly reproof, there would need no more to be ſaid to evidence, that a Conſcience you will have, which will firſt or laſt do its office.

h *Inſigne viſum eſt earum Cæſaris literarum initium; nam his verbis exorſus eſt*, Quid ſcribam vobis P. C. aut quomodo ſcribam, aut quid omnino non ſcribam hoc tempore, Dii me Deæq; pejus perdant quam perire quotidie ſentio, ſi ſcio. *Adeo facinora atque flagitia ſua ipſi quoque in ſupplicium verterant.——Tiberium non fortuna, non ſolitudines protegebant.* Tacit. *Annal.* l. 6: c. 6. p. 149.

2. Your own Conſcience will be your *beſt* friend, or your *greateſt* enemy (of any creature) unto eternity. There's *i* no greater *riches*, no greater *pleaſure*, no greater *ſafety* than a good Conſcience. Let the preſſures of the body, the hurry of the world, the affrightments of Satan be never ſo great, they can't reach the Conſcience. A good Conſcience ſingularly chears the *dying* body, joyfully accompanies unto God the *departed* Soul; triumphingly preſents *both* Soul and Body unto the *deſired* Tribunal. There's no more profitable *means*, nor ſurer *teſtimony*, nor eminent *Conveyor*, of eternal happineſs than a good Conſcience. And on the contrary, there is no greater *torment* than of an evil Conſcience: though its *gentler* checks may be diſregarded, its *louder* clamours will make you tremble. O Sirs, what will you do, when Conſcience ſhall upbraid you with your *abuſe* of mercies, *incorrigibleneſs* under judgments, *contempt* of Chriſt, and *hatred* of holineſs? you can't now endure to hear what Conſcience hath to ſay, how will you endure it unto *eternity?* if one that killed his own Father *k*, could not in ſome *Egyptians* account be more cruelly puniſhed, than by being compelled to behold the murthered body for *three* days, what a torment will it be to be forced to behold *every ſin*, with every *aggravation* unto eternity? here in bodily ſickneſs there's ſome *intervalls* to revive the Spirits; but hereafter there will not be a *moment's* intermiſſion of unexpreſſible horrour unto eternity. The Conſcience ſhall *roar*

i Vide Bern. *de inter. dom.* c. 22. p. 1070.

k *Parricidium vindicaturi Peluſii pro flagitii dignitate, nullum hactenus tormentorum ingenium perfectum duxerunt; non culeum, non vivicomburium: ſævius quid cogitarunt, piæ, ſcilicet, matris naturæ ferulam conſcientiam, ad ſummæ atrocitatis exemplum docti novam ſævitiam didicerunt, parricidam ſancientes triduo cogi ſpectare occiſi cadaver, ut ſic puniretur enormiſſimo omnium ſupplicio, admonitione facinoris.* Jo. Euſ. Nieremb *de art. vol.* l. 2. p. 156.

under infinite wrath, and the sinner shall be kept from *annihilation* under it by infinite power.

Thus I have in a weak manner performed my promise in speaking to several *kinds* of Consciences, with *remedies* and *rules*, which laid together, will I think amount to sufficient instructions, *How we may be universally and exactly Conscientious? viz.* 1. Get your Consciences *awakened* from their natural Lethargy *l*. 2. Preserve them tender from acquired *searedness* m. 3. Rectifie their *errors*, as you would get cure of blindness *n*. 4. Resolve their *doubts* as you would a claim to your lands *o*. 5. Break from your *scruples* as from thieves on the Road *p*. 6. Lay your head in Christs bosom to cure your *trembling* q. And then for the (7.) *integrity*, (and (8.) *quiet* of your Consciences, observe the rules proposed, as punctually as you would Physitians bills in a tedious sickness. 1. Avoid *sinning* as you would a train of Gun-powder *r*. 2. Be as quick in your *repentance* as in the cure of a Pleurisie *s*. 3. Live under the apprehended *presence* of the jealous God *t*. 4. *Examine* your hearts as Princes sift out Treason *u* *. 5. Pray for suitable grace, as starving persons cry for food *. 6. Let every action be as an arrow shot at a mark *x*. 7. Think of God as a *wise* Physitian *y*. 8. Be as *vile* in your own esteem as you are in the eyes of a captious enemy *z*. 9. Live upon *Christ*, as the child in the womb lives upon the Mother *a*. 10. *Love* God (as near as possibly you can) as God loves you *b*.

l 1 Cor. 15. 34.
m Heb. 3. 13.
n Eph. 4. 18.
o Rom. 14. 5.
p Isa. 35. 3, 4.
q Isa. 40. 11.
r Job 18. 15.
s Zeph. 2. 2.
t Ezek 11. 5.
u Lam. 3. 40.
* Psal. 143. 7, 8.
x 1 Cor. 10. 31.
y Job. 40. 2.
z Eph. 3. 8.
a Gal. 2. 20.
b Psal. 18. 1, 2.

But if these rules, though thus *contracted*, be too *many*, and too *long* to be *always* remembred, that you may not be overcharged with that which should *never* be forgotten: I shall commend to you some (*Spiritually*) chymical Extractions, and (if I might so express it) *Spirits* of directions, that may be to your Souls in your *Pilgrimage* toward Heaven, as your Ship-provisions in a *Sea-voyage*, generally *sufficient*, when others cannot be had. Plainly practise these *memorials* of direction in all your conscientious walking.

I. *Consult duty, not events.* There's nothing in the world for us to do, but mind our duty. Curious speculations *c* that tend not to holiness, may be reckoned among your *superfluities*: but mis-giving predictions of what may or will befall you in the discharge of your duty, may be reckoned among your grosser *iniquities*: and to venture upon sin to avoid danger, is to *sink* the Ship for *fear* of Pyrats, and must be reckoned amongst your *greatest* follies, your *worst* of sins. Is not their *reason* (questionless their *Conscience is*) dangerously *distempered*, that practically argue, this way of duty may *probably* procure mans displeasure, and therefore to prevent that, I'le take the course which will *certainly* procure Gods displeasure. Besides, by-ways will not lead you to the place you aim at *d*; but on the contrary, keep your Consciences from being violated, and you cannot be miserable. O how calm and quiet, as well as holy and heavenly would

c Τὸ ζῆν ἄρα τὸ εὖ καὶ καλῶς ἀναγκαῖον ἡγάμεν & εἰς ἐπιτίμησιν σωφρονίζησ. ἐγὼ περιπάτοις τῆς γνώσεως ἢ τὸ ζῆν, ἀλλὰ τὸ εὖ ζῆν περὶ πλείστου ποιήσεται, μήτ' ἐν παίδας, μήτ' ἐν γάμον, ἢ γῆς γονεῖς, ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀγάπης καὶ τῆς ἐν βίῳ δικαιοσύνης πρόσιμῶν. Clem. Alexandr. *Strom. lib. 6. p. 664.*

d ἐρᾷ γὰρ ὁ τοξεύειν τῷ ἀρότρῳ βελόμενος & τῷ θεῷ τὸν λαγῶ κυνηγετῶν, δυσχερὲς ἴσιν ἀλλ' ἀσελτερία & μοχθηρία τοῖς ἐπιχειρέσιν. —— ὥσπερ ἓν τὸ ὑπόδημα τῷ ποδὶ συνδιασῴζεται; & ἐ τουναντίον, οὕτω τὰς εἰς δια θέσεις συνεξομοιοῦσιν αὐτοῖς. Plutar. Περὶ εὐθυμίας, p. 471, 476.

nor

our lives be, had we learnt but this ſingle Leſſon; to be careful for nothing, but to know, and do our duty, and to leave all effects, conſequents and events to God. The truth is, 'tis a daring boldneſs for *filly* duſt to preſcribe unto infinite *wiſdom*, and to *let go* our works, to *meddle* with Gods: he hath managed the concernments of the world, and of every *individual* perſon in it, without giving occaſion to any *one* to complain, for above this five thouſand years, and doth he now need your counſel? Therefore let it be your only buſineſs to mind duty. Aye, but how ſhall I know my duty? take a ſecond memorial.

II. *What advice you would give to another, take your ſelves* e. The worſt of men are apt enough to lay ſuch burthens on other mens *f* ſhoulders, which if they would take them upon their own, they would be rare Chriſtians. *e. g.* The very *outcry* of thoſe that revile Godlineſs, who deal by the miſcarriages of Profeſſors, as the *Levite* by his *Concubine*, quarter them and divulge them; even *they* expect that thoſe which make a ſtrict profeſſion of Religion, ſhould be beyond *exception* blameleſs; and they [*even they.*] ſcorn *thoſe* that make any *defection* from their profeſſed ſtrictneſs. And on the other ſide, thoſe that are holy, they expect, that even graceleſs perſons ſhould bear reproof, receive inſtruction, and change the courſe of their lives. In *middle* caſes then between *theſe* extreams, what exactneſs will ſerious Chriſtians require, where the *byas* of their own corruptions doth not miſguide them? *David* was twice *g* ſurpriſed to paſs ſentence againſt himſelf by *remote* parables, (wherein he miſtruſted not himſelf to be concerned). Wherein this rule's too ſhort, adde a third.

III. *Do nothing on which you cannot pray for a bleſſing.* Where prayer doth not *lead*, repentance muſt *follow*; and *'tis a deſperate adventure to ſin upon hopes of repentance.* Every action (and ceſſation too) of a Chriſtian that's good, and not to be refuſed, is ſanctified by the word and prayer. It becomes not a *i* Chriſtian to do any thing ſo *trivial* k, that he can't pray over it; and if he would beſtow a *ſerious* ejaculatory prayer upon every *occurent* action, he would find, that ſuch a prayer would cut off all things *ſinful*, demur all things *doubtful*, and encourage all things *lawful.* Therefore do nothing but what you can *preface* with prayer. But theſe rules are all defective, I'le therefore cloſe with an *Example* that's infinitely above defects.

IV. *Think, and ſpeak, and do what you are perſwaded Chriſt himſelf would do in your caſe, were he upon the earth.* The Heathen they propoſed unto themſelves the beſt examples they *l* had, and therefore let us follow the beſt of *m* ours. There are many rare examples in *n* Scripture; but we may ſay of them, as 'tis ſaid of moſt of *Davids* Worthies, whoſe higheſt commendation was with this diminution *o*, *they attained not unto the firſt three.* I propoſe therefore neither great nor ſmall, but the *King of Saints* p: it becomes a Chriſtian rather to *be* an Example *q*, than to *follow* one: But by imitating of Chriſt, you will come as near as 'tis poſſible to the firſt three, for your *fellowſhip* ſhall be *with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus*

e Τέκνον ἄλλο τίθεικεν ἢ γυνὴ. Ἔδεις ἐστὶν, ὃς ἂν εἴποι, ὅτι ἀνθρώπινόν, ἀλλ' ὁ τὰν τὸ αὐτᾶ ζῆνος ἀποθάκη, εὖ θὺς ὄιμοι, τάλας ἔγω, ὁσᾶ ἔχελω δὲ μεμνῆσθαι, τὶ πάσχομῶν, περὶ ἀλλᾶν αὐτὸ ἀκάσαντες. Epictet. c. 33. Simp. 158.

f Mat. 13. 4.

g 2 Sam. 14. 4. 14.

h 1 Tim. 4. 4, 5.

i Eph. 5. 3, 4.

k Ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἁμαρτάνων, ἀπολλύει ἢ παρησία ἂν ἦν ἴσχεν ἢ συνειδὸς αὐτᾶ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῇ εὐχῇ αὐτῇ. Athan. qu. ad Antioch. p. 361. q. 77.

l Ὅταν ζηλῶ μέλεις συμβάλλειν πρόλαβε σαυτῷ, τὶ ἂν ἐποίησεν ἐν ἰσλῶ Σωκρατὴς, ἢ Ζήνων, ἢ ἐκ ἀπορῆσεις τᾶ χρῆσθαι πρὸς πάντος ἐν τῷ ἐμπεσοντι. Epict. c. 51. Simp. p. 282.

m Mic. 4. 5.

n Heb. 13. 7.

o 2 Sam. 23. 19, 23.

p Rev. 15. 3.

q 1 Pet. 2. 12, 15. 1 Theſ. 1. 7.

r 1 Joh. 1. 3. *Christ* r, through the spirit of holiness, who alone can tell you what it is
s 1 Joh. 2. 27. to abide in *s* Christ, who was, and is, and ever *will* be our absolute co-
t Heb. 13. 8. py *t*. O Christians! how did Christ *pray*, and redeem time for prayer *u*?
u Mar. 1. 25. & 6. 46. Luk. 6. 12. Joh. 11. 42. How did Christ preach, out of whose mouth proceeded no other but
* Luk. 4. 22. gracious words *, that his enemies could not but admire him *x*? at what
x Joh. 7. 46. rate did Christ value the *world*, who did and taught to renounce it *y*?
y Matt. 10. 21, 27. what time did Christ spend in *impertinent* discourse, who made *their hearts*
z Luk. 24, 17, 32. *burn within them*, whom he occasionally fell in company with *z*? How did
a Acts 10. 38. Christ go up and down *doing* a *good* to man, and *always those things* that
b Joh. 8 29. were pleasing to *b* God? Beloved, I commend to you these *four* memo-
c Josh. 2. 18, 21. rials, to be as so many *scarlet* c *threads* upon every finger of the right
d Acts 9. 6. hand one; that you may never put forth your hand to action, but these
e Rom. 2. 21. *memorials* may be in your eye. 1. Mind *d* duty. 2. What's anothers
f Psal. 129. 8. duty in your case, is *e* yours. 3. What you can't say, the Blessing of
g Psal. 123. 2. the Lord be upon it, do not meddle *f* with it. But *above* all, as soon *for-*
h Joh. 15. 18, &c. *get* your Christian name (*the name of a Christian*) as forget to eye Christ *g*;
i 1 Pet. 2. 21, 22, 23. and whatever entertainment you meet with from the profane world *h*, re-
member your Exemplar *i*, and *follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*

What

What muſt, and can, Perſons do towards their own Converſion.

Ezek. XVIII. 32.

Wherefore turn your ſelves, and live ye.

THE words are part of that ſerious Exhortation begun in the 30 *v.* *Repent and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions*: continued in the 31 *v.* *Caſt away all your tranſgreſſions, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit*; and concluded in this Verſe, *Wherefore turn your ſelves*, &c.

In the former part of the Verſe the Lord ſaith, I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, I had rather men ſhould come to the knowledg of the truth, and be ſaved; than dye in their ſins and periſh through their impenitency, *Wherefore*, or *therefore*, *turn your ſelves*, &c.

The Exhortation in theſe words, is back'd with a reaſon of great, yea the greateſt ſtrength, *viz.* Life, *Turn and live*; that is, Ye ſhall live comfortably here, and happily for ever hereafter.

There be four Propoſitions deducible from theſe words:

1. *That man is turned from God.*
2. *That it's mans duty to turn unto God again.*
3. *That the Lords willingneſs that men ſhould rather live than dye, ſhould be a ſtrong Argument to move them to turn.*
4. *That thoſe who do turn ſhall live.*

I ſhall wave all thoſe great Truths, and come to that which the words ſeem to import, *viz.* A power in man to turn himſelf. It is a good rule which *Glaſſius* in his Philology gives us, That active Verbs are given to thoſe things which do not properly and by immediate influx do that which they ſignifie, *Sed certa tantum ratione concurrunt. God ſaid to Moſes, Lift up thy rod, ſtretch out thy hand over the Sea and divide it*, Exod. 14. 16. *Moſes* had not power to divide the Sea; but, becauſe there was a certain concurrence. *In Philol. l. 3. p. 290.*

currence of *Moſes* uſing the Rod according to divine directions, therefore it is attributed unto *Moſes*, whereas it was the work of God alone; for *ver.* 21 'tis ſaid, *The Lord cauſed the Sea to go back*: So in the work of Converſion, becauſe man doth ſomething about it, therefore he is ſaid to turn himſelf, although the action be peculiar to the Lord, *Ephraim* ſaith, *Turn thou me and I ſhall be turned.*

Jer. 31. 18.

The Query here is, *What can, or ought perſons to do towards their own Converſion?*

Something firſt is to be ſpoken of mans *power*, or *can*; and then ſomething of what man *ought* to do.

For the firſt of theſe: There is a three-fold power conſiderable, an Active, a Paſſive, and an Obediential power.

1. An Active power, as in fire there is ſuch a power to warm; in a good Tree there is ſuch a power to bring forth good fruit. This kind of power is denied to be in man, *Mat.* 12. 34, *How can you that are evil ſpeak good things?* If they cannot ſpeak good things; much leſs can they do good things.

2. A Paſſive power, as in Wax to receive the impreſſion of the Seal, and in Wood to receive the engravings of the Carver. This power is not found in man: *Paul* ſaith expreſly, The natural man, or *ſouly* man ὁ ψυχικὸς, receives not the things of the Spirit of God, and ὁ πνευματικὸς, neither can he. A ſtiff dead hand receives nothing, neither can it.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

3. An Obediential power, which conſiſts in a capability to receive what form or impreſſion ſoever the mighty God by his power ſhall put upon a Creature, ſuch a power is in a ſtony heart to become fleſh; it's capable to be made fleſhy when God puts forth his power. This is the power granted by Divines to be in man, and it is a very low power.

The Sacred Writ is plentiful in ſetting out the impotency of man, it tells us that,

He is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither can be, Rom. 8. 7.

That he cannot pleaſe God, *Rom.* 8. 8.
That he cannot come to Chriſt, *Joh.* 6. 44.
That he can do nothing without Chriſt, *Joh.* 15. 5.
That he cannot believe, *Joh.* 12. 39. *Chap.* 5. 44.
That he cannot love God, 1 *Joh.* 4. 20.
That he cannot do good, yeild good fruit, *Jer.* 13. 23. *Mat.* 7. 17.
That he cannot think a good thought, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5.

Mans liberty or power is referrible to Natural, Moral, or Spiritual things: To the firſt, he hath great ſtrength: To the ſecond, ſome: To the third, none. A man freely doth natural and moral things, he can live ſoberly, and chaſtly, *quoad externos actus*, as to outward acts; he may abſtain from groſs ſins, Theft, Murder, Drunkenneſs, &c. he may come to the Congregation freely, hear the Word, and not ſtop his ears as the deaf Adder doth; but as to ſpiritual acts, *qua tales*, he is impotent.

For

For the better underſtanding of the Query, *What perſons can do towards their own Converſion*, I ſhall lay down ſeveral Theſes or Concluſions, which I ſhall make good by Scripture as I proceed.

1. *Concluſ.*

1. All diſpoſitions and inclinations to ſpiritual good which man had at firſt in his Creation are loſt and ruin'd by the Fall, *Rom.* 8. 7, *The carnal mind is enmity againſt God:* it's ſo far from having inclination to God, or the things of God, that it's not only an enemy, but enmity againſt God. And *Jer.* 2. 21. the Lord ſaith, *I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right ſeed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a ſtrange vine unto me?* They had loſt their original ſap, and were degenerated into a wild Vine, and could not bring forth good Cluſters.

2. *Concluſ.*

2. Man being altogether averſe from good, the ſervant of ſin and death, ſold under ſin, Satans captive, and dead in ſin, is not able by his own ſtrength and power to convert or prepare himſelf thereunto, *Rom.* 3. 10, 12. *Rom.* 8. 2. *Rom.* 7. 14. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. *Col.* 2. 13. *Rom.* 5. 6. *Joh.* 6. 44, 45. there muſt be the Fathers giving, and drawing, his gift and power, otherwiſe there is no coming to Chriſt. Men are without Chriſt, in their natural conditions, *Eph.* 2. 12. they are dead to his life and righteouſneſs.

3. *Concluſ.*

The Lord calls for humane endeavours, and would have men do more than they do, *Luk.* 19. 30. To thoſe which had the Talents, he ſaith, *Occupy till I come*, be pragmatical, beſtir your ſelves, and improve your Talents, ſo that at my return I may find you gainers: and he that hid his Talent in a Napkin, is branded for a wicked ſervant, *Verſ.* 22, and for a wicked and ſloathful ſervant, *Matth.* 25. 26.

πραγματεύσασθε, this ſignifies, *negotiari in aliqua re ad lucrum.* Budæus.

4. *Concluſ*

Men may do more than they do, *Iſa.* 64. 7, *There is none that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold on thee:* they did not ſhake off lukewarmneſs and lazineſs, and rouze up themſelves to take hold of God by faith and prayer. It's the complaint of Chriſt that he was hungry, and they gave him no meat, thirſty, *&c.* they might have done thoſe things, and beſtowed their eſtates upon Chriſts members, as well as others. It's evident men may do more than they do, for that they do not that in their healths, which they do in time of their affliction; then they will early ſeek God, *Hoſ.* 5. 15. Weak ones do more than ſtronger, many of weak parts act beyond thoſe of larger abilities. Many complain in their ſickneſs that they have loſt time, and not done what they might: where is the man that dare plead it before the Lord, that he hath done all he could? Becauſe men do not what they might, the Lord may not only deny grace unto them, doing *ſomething*, yea, doing *much*, but juſtly condemn them, becauſe they did not *what* was in *their power*. It is a common ſaying among *Papiſts*, *Jeſuites*, *Arminians* and others, *faſcienti quod in ſe eſt, gratiam non denegat Deus.* This is no ſound foundation, for it ſuppoſeth ſome

Nos negamus ullos unquam fuiſſe bene utentes bono naturæ propter Deum, itaque nos dubitamus eſſe aliquod meritum Congrui. Chamier. panſtrat. Cath. T. 3. l. 14. c. 4.

some men do act to the uttermost of their power. But [whoever yet did all that was in his power]? Whoever went so far, as that he might not have gone one step farther? Did ever any read, hear, or pray so much, but he might have read, heard, and pray'd more? *Jehoram* might have waited on the Lord longer, 2 *King.* 6. *ult.*

5. *Conclus.*

Humane endeavours are not required to co-operate with Gods grace, and so make it effectual, but his grace, makes their endeavours effectual when he pleaseth; Physical means make not Gods power effectual, but his power makes them effectual; and so it's in mens endeavours. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, *Rom.* 9. 16.

6. *Conclus.*

All that men do before Conversion is not in vain, fruitless and to no purpose. When *Rehoboam* and the Princes humbled themselves at the preaching of *Shemaiah*, they were reprieved and delivered from destruction, 2 *Chron.* 12. 12. *Ahabs* humiliation did adjourn the judgment, 1 *King.* 21. 27, 29. The *Ninevites* found favour with God upon their fasting and repentance, *Jon.* 3. 8, 9, 10.

7. *Conclus.*

All the actings and endeavours of men whatsoever they be, are not *formaliter* dispositions and preparations to Conversion, so that Conversion must necessarily follow upon them: For there is no necessary connexion between the actings of men, and divine Grace. The Lord hath nowhere said, if you act so far, or be so disposed, qualified, or prepared, *I will convert you.* If Gods grace did depend upon mens actings, then those that are most Civil and Moral must be taken, and those who are profane and rebellious must be left; but Pharisees were excluded, when Publicans and Harlots were admitted. Great sinners sometimes are brought in, who did nothing towards their Conversion, when those that did much are shut out. *Mary Magdalen* a great and infamous sinner is taken, when the foolish Virgins were refused; they were Virgins free from the spots and pollutions of the world, they had Lamps, Professions, they did much, they went out to meet the Bride-groom, they gat oyl into their Lamps, they went to the door, and cryed, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, and there was no opening to them. What preparations had *Paul* to this work of Conversion? he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person, these were his preparatory works he had towards his Conversion, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13.

Hæc sunt optra præparatoria, quibus se effert Paulus. Jun. in locum.

8. *Conclus.*

Those that live under the means of grace, the administrations of Law and Gospel, have some operations and gifts of the Spirit, (which some call common preventing and exciting Grace) whereby they are inabled to do many things towards, and in order to Conversion. The Scribe that was teachable, and answered Christ discreetly, was not far from the Kingdom of God, *Mar.* 12. 32, 34. He was nearer unto it, than those had not the means. The preaching of the Gospel is to make the converted meet for

for Glory, and the unconverted meet for Grace, to prepare and bring them to regeneration. *I have begotten you through the preaching of the Goſpel*, ſaith *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. The preaching of it wrought much in them, before converſion it ſelf was wrought. *Balaam* living under the Law, and amongſt or nigh the people of God, was much enlightned, and greatly convinced, inſomuch that he deſired to *dye the death of the righteous.*

9. *Concluſ.*

No actings of men, or qualifications in men, are cauſes of converſion, do merit it, or make them congruous for it. They are not antecedent cauſes, or ſo much as *Cauſæ ſine quibus non*; but the Lord doth according to his Prerogative, work ſometimes where they are not, as *Ezek.* 16, *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee, live.* There was no cauſe, condition, or qualification in them to beget affection, or move the Lord to do ought for them. It was the time of his love, and he ſaid, *live.*

10. *Concluſ.*

What ever the endeavours and diſpoſitions of men be, they are only by way of order before Converſion, they are only antecedaneous thereunto on mans part, not neceſſary on Gods part, who can, and oft doth work where there be no ſuch previous acts or diſpoſitions, as in the dry bones in *Ezekiel*, they had no diſpoſition or power in them to rattle and come together, neither had the dead womb of *Sarah* any power or vertue in it to conceive.

11. *Concluſ.*

Acts of men towards Converſion, are not to be reſted in, as any ſatisfaction for ſin, as making the perſon acceptable to God, or as inducements of God towards Converſion; but we muſt acknowledg our ſelves unprofitable ſervants, when we have done all that is commanded us, *Luk.* 17. 10.

Qui nobis ipſis nihil a Deo meriti ſumus, quibus Deus nullam gratiam, nullam mercedem debet ſcil ſi jure nobiſcum agat juxta conditionem ſervorum. Brugenſis in loc.

12. *Concluſ.*

Mans quickning, believing, repenting, or turning, are not acts of man in part, and partly of God, but they are wholly of God, and from God. *You hath he quickened*, Epheſ. 2. 1. they were dead, and could not quicken themſelves, it was He, the Lord: So, *No man can come to me except the Father draw him*, Joh. 6. 44. This drawing or cauſing the ſoul to believe in Chriſt, is wholly the Fathers work. And *Ephraim* ſaith, *Turn thou me, and I ſhall be turned*, Jer. 31. 18. he could not turn himſelf; if the Lord had not done it, it would never have been done. *Paul* ſaith, *It's not in him that wills*, &c. *but in God*, &c. The will and deed are of Him, not of man, *Phil.* 2. 13. It is the Lord who is *cauſa totius entis. Every good and perfect gift comes down from above*, it's not a perfect gift, if man contribute to it. The ſaying of the Father is ſound: *Velle habemus, ſed bene velle & in parte, & in toto, eſt a gratia.*

N. ſi donum Dei eſſet, ipſa ad Deum noſtra converſio non ei diceretur, Deus virtutum converte nos, Aug. de gra. & lib. Arb. Jam. 1. 17. Auguſt.

13. *concluſ.*

Man in the firſt act of Converſion is meerly paſſive. *Thoſe who believe, are born, not of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God*;

nothing of mans will comes in. Not *ultimum dictamen intellectus* did ſet the will on work here, but *the Lord begat them of his own will*, Jam. 1. 18. So that mans will is not *ſemiviva & ſemimortua*, but *pentus extincta ad bonum ſpirituale*, and ſo *ad hoc* to this of Converſion, as the vital faculty is gone in a dead man,

14. *Concluſ.*

Mans will being firſt converted to God, and by God himſelf, converts it ſelf alſo unto God, *acta agit*, as a childs hand in writing, being acted by the Maſters hand, it writes. Hence man may be ſaid to turn himſelf: for the will being healed and made good, of unwilling willing, it hath an intrinſecal principle of willing good, and ſo dominion over its own acts, whereby it turneth it ſelf to God. Where there is the Fathers drawing firſt, there is preſently the Souls coming.

Theſe *Concluſions* being laid down, I ſhall ſhew you what men can do towards their converſion: but firſt I muſt inform you, that converſion may be taken two ways.

1. Strictly, for the infuſion of grace into the heart and will of man, whereby he is regenerate, and his will made good; here man and his will being meerly paſſive (for in this act *voluntas nec eſt libera nec voluntaria*) he can do nothing towards his own converſion in this ſenſe.

2. It may be taken *pro tota ſerie auxiliorum quibus ad eam movemur*. For all helps and means which further us that way; and in this ſenſe it's affirmed,

That men may do much towards their converſion, they may materially diſpoſe themſelves thereunto.

1. They may do much as Heathens have done, or would have done, had they lived under the ſame means, and had ſuch motives as they have. The Lord tells *Ezekiel*, that *if he had ſent him to a people of a ſtrange Language*, that was, to the Gentiles, *they would have hearkened unto him*, Ezek. 3. 6. *they would have received him and obeyed his Doctrine*. It is certified from the mouth of Chriſt, That *if the mighty works done in Chorazin and Bethſaida, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented*, Matt. 11. 21. And that *the men of Nineveh ſhould riſe in judgment with the then preſent generation, and condemn it, becauſe they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold a greater than Jonas was there*, Matt. 12. 41. If one Sermon of *Jonas*, who was one of the leſſer Prophets, prevailed ſo much with Heathens, why ſhould not many Sermons of Chriſt, who is the chief of all the Prophets, prevail as much, if not more with Chriſtians? *Væ torpori noſtro*, what will become of us? *Rahab* ſhewed kindneſs to the people of God, and that was antecedaneous to her converſion. *Herod* heard the Word gladly, *Mar.* 6. 20. And *Pharaoh* deſired the prayers of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, Exod. 8 28.

2. They may ſit under a powerful Miniſtry, coming with reverence before God, not offering the ſacrifice of fools, but hear the Truth without being contentious againſt it, as they were *Rom.* 2. 8. They may let the truth have a full ſtroak at them and their corruptions, *They may receive*

ceive the love of the truth, 2 Theſ. 2. 10. *And not hold it in unrighteouſneſs*, Rom. 1. 18. So that they will not ſuffer it to have influence into their affections, and to break out into action.

3. They may hearken to the voice of Gods judgments and rods, when they are abroad upon themſelves and others. No man ſhould deſpiſe the chaſtiſement of the Lord, but every one ſhould hear the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it. The Prophet *Iſaiah* tells us, *That the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs, when the judgments of the Lord are in the earth.* His judgments are the beſt School-maſters, and teach many good leſſons. *Waldus* was taught by the hand of God upon one of his ſociates, to become a new man. When *Manaſſes* was in affliction, he beſought the Lord, and humbled himſelf greatly, 2 *Chron.* 33. 12. *Vexatio dat intellectum*, when the Lord doth box and buffet us with his judgments, our underſtandings are opened, and fear falls upon us: and though this fear be ſervile at firſt, yet it may end in filial, the ſpirit of bondage may become the ſpirit of Adoption. Iſa. 26. 9. *Diſcite juſtitiam moniti, & non temnere nunc.* Virg. Παιδὼν δὲ τὲ πάντος ἐγνω.

4. They may obſerve the difference is made in mens lives after converſion, from that which was before. Converſion is a ſtrange work, it makes a man another man. They in *Peter* thought it a ſtrange thing that men left their old courſes. In converſion, Wolves are made Lambs, and perſecutors Preachers. How was it, that when *Paul* preached, *all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid, Is not this he who deſtroyed them who called on this name in Jeruſalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Prieſts?* True, it was *he unconverted* did ſo, not *he converted*; now he was another, a new man; now he was a Chriſtian, and had other principles and practiſes than before, there was a great change wrought in him, and ſo in *Mary Magdalen.* Obſervation of ſuch examples have their uſe and energy: For examples are ſtrong traces to draw men from wicked practices, *Why compelleſt thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews*, ſaid *Paul* to *Peter?* Gal. 2. 14. *Peter's* example was the compulſion. There is a kind of compulſion in examples, not violent, but alluring and attracting. The example of the believing Wife may win the unbelieving Husband, 1 *Pet.* 3. 1. A prudent gracious Wife gains much upon a graceleſs Husband, by her modeſty and obedience. *Ego non ſum ego.* 1 Pet. 4. 4. *Præcepta docent & ducunt exempla trahunt.*

5. They may ſee what equity there is, that they ſhould ſerve the Lord, being his creatures, and ſervants, and not only ſerve him, but ſo ſerve him as they have ſerved their ſinful luſts, and ſomething more, ſeeing they depend on him. *I ſpeak after the manner of men*, ſaith *Paul*, Rom. 6. 19. It's rational, juſt and equal, that as you *have yielded your members ſervants to uncleanneſs*, &c. ſo now yield them *ſervants to righteouſneſs, unto holineſs*; it's reaſon, juſtice, and equity that you ſhould do ſo. Should not men take as much pains for Heaven as for Hell, for their Souls as for their Bodies, for the Lord Chriſt, as for Creatures? Should they not be as diligent to weaken their Luſts, as they have been to ſtrengthen them? Should they not be at as much coſt to maintain the pure Worſhip of God, as the Inventions and Traditions of Men? It's a complaint of the Ἀνθρώπινον λέγω.

Iſa. 55. 2. Lords, *Wherefore do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not?* They might have ſpent their money, labour, time, and ſtrength, and as much for true bread, which would have fed their ſouls, as they did for that which was as no bread, but rather Luk. 15. 16. husks for ſwine.

6. They remove and abate ſin in part, which is done by the contrary. Knowledg removes ignorance, as light doth darkneſs; grief abates pleaſure, and fear boldneſs in ſinning: Patience keeps under paſſion, and faſting tames unruly luſts. When the ſtrength of a Feaver is abated by phyſical means, a man is diſpoſed towards health: and when a man hath gotten Moralities (which he may do) and by them made an abatement of his ſins and luſts, he is *materially* diſpoſed to grace; as the ground when plowed is for ſeed, though the ſeed be not yet ſown.

7. They may do *materially* what Converts do. There is no act conſidered in its meer nature and kind, which a true Chriſtian may perform, but one unconverted may perform alſo, and may have like diſpoſitions unto 2 Tim. 3. 4. Acts 8. 13. 2 Sam. 13. 22. thoſe they have. They may love God: It's clear, *they loved God, who loved pleaſures more than God.* They may have Faith: *Simon Magus* believed: they may hate ſin in others, if not in themſelves. *Abſalom* hated *Amnons* uncleanneſs; they may *delight in God, and in his ways*, Iſa. 58. 2. They may have a zeal for God, and ſuch a zeal as may prevail more with them than temporal things. The *Jews* were ſo zealous of the Law, Rom. 10. 2. and for the Traditions of the Elders, that they would have ventured their lives for them: ſo *Paul* before his Converſion, how zealous was he? *Act.* 22. 3, 4. *Gal.* 1. 14.

To come more particularly and cloſely to the queſtion. Though Converſion be wrought in an inſtant, yet men have ſome prævious diſpoſitions thereunto, who live under the ſound of the Goſpel, and obtain ſuch knowledg as worketh in them ſeveral things, which I ſhall ſhew unto you from *Acts* 2. 37, & 38. *Verſ. And when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and ſaid, Men*, &c. Many preparative diſpoſitions or qualifications they had unto Repentance or Converſion, but they had not yet repented; for *Peter* ſaith, notwithſtanding theſe, *repent.*

1. Men may be convinced of ſin as theſe were, they found they had tranſgreſſed the Law of God, and were guilty before him, for they were pricked in their hearts. Men may have ſtrong convictions of ſin, and not converted from ſin.

κατενύγησαν *autum animi dolorem ſignificat.* Piſcat. 2. They may mourn for ſin, and grieve that they have done ſuch and ſuch things. Theſe men had crucified the Lord Chriſt, put an innocent perſon to death, ſaw themſelves in an ill condition, and thereupon mourned and grieved ſorely, as the word *pricked* intimates; they had ſuch grief as pained and afflicted their hearts. There's a *How* ſet upon *Ahabs* humiliation by the Lord himſelf: *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf*, 1 King. 21. 29.

3. They may be fill'd with fear, and dread the threatnings and puniſhments of God due to ſin. This was the caſe here; they had provoked the Lord againſt their ſouls, felt their Conſciences condemning of them, apprehended

prehended the judgments of God near unto them, and ſo were poſſeſt with much fear leſt the Lord ſhould deſtroy them, and therefore ſay, *Men and brethren what ſhall we do?* We know not whither to go, where to hide our ſelves, or what to do, that we may eſcape the things we have deſerved, and fear.

4. They may confeſs their ſin, renounce it, and reform much; theſe Auditors of *Peter* being pricked in their hearts, ſaid, *What ſhall we do?* We have ſinned, and that greatly; we confeſs and acknowledg it before God and you, it was a curſed act of ours, and we abhor it, we will never do ſo hereafter. They were ſick of ſin, and vomited it up, as they in *Peter*, 2 Pet. 2. 22. and would change their minds and manners, and walk in any way the Apoſtles ſhould direct them. *The Merchant*, Matt. 13. 46. *ſold all that he had for the pearl, before he bought it.* This ſelling all, is made by ſome Interpreters to be his reſtraint from all inward ſin, and his conformity to all outward duties. This was much, and yet not more than unconverted perſons may attain unto. *Herod* reformed many things, the fooliſh Virgins went far, as was ſaid before, they were Virgins, free from ſpot and pollution, they had Lamps, viſible profeſſions, *they went forth to meet the Bridegroom*; they had ſome faith in him, and affection to him, elſe they would not have gone forth.

5. They may juſtifie the Law and the Lord, ſhould he condemn them, deal ſeverely with them; what ſhall we do, ſay theſe perſons? we are guilty, we have broken the Law, which is holy, righteous, and good, and ſo is God likewiſe, who is the Author thereof; if therefore we be condemned, and muſt bear the curſe and puniſhment of the Law, we muſt both juſtifie the Lord and it. Men may accept the puniſhment of their iniquity, and juſtifie the inflictors thereof: man hath no cauſe to complain of the puniſhment of his ſins. It's brought in by way of objurgation; *Wherefore doth a living man complain for the puniſhment of his ſins?* He may com- Lam. 3. 39. plain of his ſins, not of his puniſhment. Many Malefactors after ſentence paſſed on them, do juſtifie both Judg and Law.

6. Men may ſeriouſly conſider the nature of their ſin, what circumſtances it is cloathed with, what aggravations it admits, what crimſon and skarlet is in it; what light, love, mercies, means, ingagements it is againſt. What ſhall we do, ſay theſe troubled ſouls? We have ſinned againſt the light of nature, the Law of *Moſes*, our own conſciences, the love of God and Chriſt towards ſinners, in that we have crucified Chriſt, a man approved of God, whom we knew had done many miracles, wonders and ſigns, *Acts* 2. 22. and deſerved not death: oh what ſhall we do, our ſins are ſo dreadful?

It's in mens power to lay to heart what wrong an infinite bleſſed holy God hath by their ſins, what mercies they keep from them, how greatly they defile them, what miſeries and miſchiefs they bring upon them, what a weight of wrath hangs over their heads for them. They may conſider what checks of conſcience they have ſtifled, what motions of the Spirit they have withſtood, what precious ſeaſons of grace they have neglected and ſlighted, what pains they have taken to ſatisfie a luſt, how dear

dear it hath coſt them, how careleſs they have been of their ſouls, what a ſeparation their ſins have made between God and them. They may mind and meditate on it, that mans life is ſhort, *the pleaſures of ſin are but for a ſeaſon*, that there is abſolute neceſſity of turning to God: *Except you repent, you ſhall all periſh.* That turning is acceptable to God, elſe he would not call for it, nor make ſuch gracious promiſes to it, as are in Holy-Writ.

7. They may come to it, to ſee no help in themſelves or in any creature whatſoever, *What ſhall we do?* ſay theſe wounded men, we cannot help our ſelves, we have no plaiſters that will ſtick, no medicines which will heal; we are wounded in our Conſciences, and as our hands, ſo theirs are too ſhort to help us; it's not in humane power to bind up our breaches, *What ſhall we do?* men may ſee themſelves helpleſs, that they are without ſtrength, ſhut up under ſin, guilt and unbelief, children of wrath, and in a loſt condition, the Law curſing them and ſentencing them to ſuffer.

8. They may arrive to a reſolution of doing or ſuffereing any thing to be ſaved: *What ſhall we do?* We are reſolved if we may find mercy, *and live*, to do whatever ſhall be commanded, to ſuffer whatever ſhall be impoſed. The pride of their ſpirits are broken, their hearts become teachable and tractable, and their reſolutions high for any thing to be done or ſuffered: ſo was it with the Jaylor, *Acts* 16. 30. when men are in ſtorms at Sea, or on their ſick-beds at home, they reſolve if God will ſpare them, to do or ſuffer any thing for God and his ways, and their own Salvation.

9. They may conceive fair hopes of mercy. The Lord Chriſt being held out in the Goſpel, and freely offered to ſinners, this breeds hope in them, a *general* and *preparatory* hope: *What ſhall we do?* You told us that God had raiſed up that Jeſus we crucified, and made him Lord and Chriſt; and that whoſoever ſhould call upon his name ſhould be ſaved, therefore we hope there is mercy for us. Thus had they a hope kindled in them, and *Peter* in the two next verſes ſtrengthens their hope, ſaying, *Repent and ye ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt, and the promiſe is to you and to your children.*

Acts 2.21.

10. They may thirſt after, and pray for the mercy hoped for. Such a qualification was in theſe men: *What ſhall we do?* You men of God, we are a thirſt, and do intreat you to tell us where we may have water to quench our heat, mercy to pardon our ſins, balm to cure our wounds. The Publican in *Luke* hath left us his ſhort pithy and affectionate prayer to imitate, being in this caſe and ſtate, *Lord*, ſaith he, *be merciful to me a ſinner.* He was ſenſible of his ſin, and of his want of righteouſneſs, he had hope of mercy, and thereupon came to the Temple to pray; and pray'd earneſtly for mercy, and Converſion is none of the leaſt mercies of God, or leaſt needful for a ſinner.

11. Men being come thus far, they are to wait upon God for doing the work: when the pots were fill'd with water, the water was not made Wine, till Chriſt put forth his mighty power; neither were the men who lay at the pool of *Bethesda* cur'd, till the Angel came down and ſtirred the

the waters: ſo a man in this caſe is to wait until the Spirit of the Lord come in, *& Omnipotenti ſuavitate*, or *victrici delectatione* overcome his will, and ſet it for the Lord, and ſpiritual things: when this is, the work is done, and done without violence to the will; for it's an Omnipotent preſence prevails with the will, and it's immediately made willing in the day of this power.

By theſe forementioned things men are in a proximity or nextneſs to Converſion, but not converted. It muſt be an higher power than our own, which lifts us up into an higher nature or ſtate than we are in at preſent. Though men may do much upon moral perſwaſions: yet not ſo much as to make themſelves Converts or Spiritual, of Animal or Natural. Previous actions and preparitive diſpoſitions, may make a man a picture of a Convert, not a true or living Convert.

Having ſhewn what perſons can, and may do towards their Converſion, it remains to declare what they ought to do.

The Word *muſt* or *ought*, the ſignification of δεῖ in *Greek* imports two things.

1. Neceſſity, there *muſt* be Hereſies, 1 *Cor.* 11. 19. it's no mans duty to broach or bring in Hereſies, but they *muſt* be; it's neceſſary for the diſcovery of men approved.

2. Duty, God is a Spirit, and *muſt* be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth, it's mens duty ſo to do, *Joh.* 4.24. It was the Phariſees and Scribes duty to pay tythe of Mint, Anniſe, and Cummin, *&c.* therefore, ſaith Chriſt, *Theſe things ought they to have done*, &c. Matt. 23. 23.

Now then what perſons can do, they ought to do: Firſt, there is a neceſſity of it, we muſt do what we can; elſe we are ſloathful and unfaithful, and our damnation will be juſt: one thing is neceſſary, *viz.* to turn unto God, that our ſouls may be ſaved, here it will hold good, Turn or burn; if it be neceſſary to prevent burning in everlaſting flames, it's neceſſary to turn, and ſo to do the utmoſt we can towards the ſame.

Secondly, it's our duty: *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait-gate*, ſaith Chriſt, he commands it, and lays this injunction upon all, ἀγωνίζεσθε, ſtrain, be in an agony: as Chriſt was in the work of mans redemption, ſo let men be in the works of their Converſion, put forth themſelves as they did in the Olympick Games, the Wreſtlers and Runners exerted all their might to obtain; and ſo muſt men about the work of their Converſion. The Lord who hath no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, ſaith, *Turn your ſelves and live.* There is life in turning, and what ſhould not men do to preſerve or obtain life?

The Lord hath two great ends in ſaying thus, *Turn your ſelves and live ye*, although he know man is not able to do it.

1. That we may ſee how corrupt and impotent our nature is, and ſo break the ſtrength of humane confidence thereby, and bring us to be ſenſible of, and throughly to bewail our condition. It is not ſo as ſome think and ſpeak, *viz.* that whatever God commands, man hath power to do: What man ever kept the Law ſince the fall of *Adam?* And is not the Law given by way of command? If man could keep the Law, we might

Quicquid nobis præcipitur à Deo, ad illud faciendum ſufficientem potentiam habe-

mus.

might be juſtified and have life by it, *Rom.* 8. 3. *Gal.* 3. 21. but the Law can neither do the one nor the other, and why? Becauſe man hath not power or ſtrength to keep it.

Dixit Pelagius, quod homo ſolius liberi arbitrii viribus poteſt perficere dei mandata. Eradwardinus de cauſa dei, l. 2. c. 4.

2. To put us upon looking out for help from whence the command cometh. Hence it is that what the Lord commandeth us to in one place, he promiſeth to give in another, *Circumciſe the foreskin of your heart,* Deut. 10. 16. and God ſaith, *Deut.* 30. 6, *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thy heart.* In the former verſe to the Text, they are commanded to make themſelves new hearts and new ſpirits, which they could not do, therefore in *Ezek.* 36. 26, the Lord promiſeth to give and put the ſame in them: *Repent and turn your ſelves,* Ezek. 14. 6. and Chap. 36. 27, *I will put my Spirit into them, and cauſe them to walk in my ways:* the ſpirit God would put in, ſhould turn them from their Idols, and own ways, and cauſe them to walk in his ways. The Lord doth therefore command ſuch things, that our deſires and endeavours being quickened, he may reach forth help unto us.

Idco dat præceptum ut excitet deſiderium & præſtet auxilium. Leo.

Therefore let us apply our ſelves to all theſe means and ways by which the Lord worketh Converſion. Let us make uſe of all the ways forenamed, and eſpecially hear the word preach'd, and pray, *Turn us, O Lord, and we ſhall be turned.* And ſee to it that we uſe the means in good earneſt; we may do more (as hath been ſhewed) than we do. It's the counſel of him who was wiſer than other men, that *whatever our hands do find to do, we ſhould do it with our might,* Eccleſ. 9. 10. that is, with our whole might; God muſt have the heart, the whole heart, and the fervency of it, *Be fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*; lazineſs and lukewarmneſs will not promote the work, fervour and diligence may further it much, ſee *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5, 6. and remember what the Lord Chriſt hath ſaid, *Ask and ye ſhall have, ſeek and ye ſhall find, knock and it ſhall be opened unto you.*

Rom. 12. 11.

How

How may beloved Luſts be diſcovered and Mortified.

Matt. V. 29, 30.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into Hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into Hell.

MY Text is a part of Chriſts Sermon on the Mount: I ſhall not hold you long in the *Context* or *portal*, but only *paſs through* unto the words that I have read.

In the verſe before, our *Saviour* tells us, that *Whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* This was ſpoken in oppoſition to the *Scribes* and *Phariſes*, and may be urged againſt many carnal *Proteſtants*, that have but groſs conceits concerning the *Law* of *God*; and in particular, that the outward act of uncleanneſs only is the breach of the ſeventh Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not commit adultery.* Now our *Saviour* corrects this miſtake: That *whoſoever looketh on a woman to luſt after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*; not will do it, but he *hath done it already: there is a ſpeedy paſſage from the eye to the heart*: And becauſe the eye and the hand are many times *uſed*, as principal incitements to this ſin, our *Saviour* gives his Diſciples and us this ſerious and holy advice in the words that I have read, *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*, &c.

The words contain *a double Exhortation*, together with *a double Reaſon and enforcement.*

1. A double Exhortation: *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee: if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee.*

2. A double Reaſon and Enforcement: *For it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members ſhould periſh, and not that thy whole body ſhould be caſt into hell:* and ſo again, *Verſ.* 30.

In the handling of theſe words, I ſhall firſt ſpeak to them by way of *Explication*, and then by way of *Obſervation.*

1. For the *Explication* of them, I would entreat you to take into your thoughts theſe *particulars.*

1. We muſt enquire into the meaning of theſe two expreſſions, *the right eye*, and the *right hand*: moſt *Expoſitors* by far carry it, that theſe words are to be expounded *improperly* and *figuratively*: and here I ſhall not acquaint you, how *Popiſh* Writers abound in their own ſenſe concerning theſe words: there are ſweet truths, that *kindly* and *freely*, without ſtraining, may be deduced from this Scripture; *like the Bee, I would not tear the flower I light on.*

There are *two interpretations* given of this place, that I ſhall take notice of.

1. There are ſome that by *right eye*, and *right hand*, underſtand our neareſt and deareſt comforts which we have in this world, which muſt be parted with for Chriſts ſake, yet not *abſolutely*, but upon this conſideration, if they *offend*; *If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee: If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee:* Now this is *bona expoſitio*, a good Expoſition, as our Divines diſtinguiſh, but not *recta expoſitio*, a right Expoſition: agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, but not ſuitable to the ſcope and deſign of our *Saviour* in this place. Therefore,

2. There are others that by *right eye*, and *right hand*, underſtand beloved luſts, as hard to be parted with, as *right hands*, or *right eyes*: our Saviour mentions the *right eye*, and the *right hand*, becauſe they are moſt prized, as having more than ordinary of ſpirits and natural heat, and ſo more fit for action; I am ſure this may be ſaid concerning the *right hand.*

Indeed I conceive it an hard matter to prove, that by *divine appointment* one hand ſhould be more uſeful than the other: but as God hath given us two eyes, and two ears, ſo two hands, to uſe both *indifferently*, and that if need required the one might ſupply the loſs of the other: if any, methinks the *left hand* ſhould be preferred, becauſe it is neareſt the *heart*, the fountain of life and activity: but Chriſt takes them, as he finds them, as he doth in many other caſes, and as we have ordered the matter, the *right hand* is more active and ſtrong than the other, and ſo more precious: but to our purpoſe,

Some, I ſay, by the *right eye*, and the *right hand*, underſtand our beloved luſts; it is the uſage of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, in a

figurative

figurative way to expreſs corruption by the parts and members of our bodies: ſo St. *Paul*, Rom. 7. 23, *I ſee another law in my members, warring againſt the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of ſin, which is in my members.* And the ſame Apoſtle, *Col.* 3. 5, *Mortifie therefore your members, which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection*, &c. As the members of the natural body need *caſtigation*, 1 Cor. 9. 27, *I keep under my body, and bring it into ſubjection*, ſo the membets of the ſinful body need *mortification*: and here in the Text, ſin is expreſſed by the *right eye*, and the *right hand*. Rom. 7. 27. Col. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 27.

2. *If thy right eye offend thee*, in the Greek it is σκανδαλίζη σε, *ſcandalize* thee, hinder thee in a way of duty: for you muſt note, that obedience and holineſs is often in Scripture repreſented unto us, by a *way*; to give you one place for all, *Pſal.* 119. 1, *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord*: and men are ſaid to be *offended*, when ſomething cauſes them to ſtumble, or fall in this *way*. Sin is as it were a block or ſtone, at which men ſtumble and fall: *let him which thinketh he ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall.* Pſal. 119. 1.

3. *Pluck it out, and caſt it from thee; cut it off, and caſt it from thee*: a Metaphor taken from *Chyrurgions*, whoſe manner it is, when the whole body is endangered by any part, to cut it off *ne pars ſincera trahatur*: but before I leave theſe expreſſions, take notice of the *Emphaſis* that is in them, in theſe particulars.

1. 'Tis not ſaid, ſuffer thy *right eye* to be plucked out, or thy *right hand* to be cut off: but thou thy ſelf, *pluck it out, and caſt it from thee, cut it off, and caſt it from thee*: to note two things;

1. That we our ſelves muſt engage in the mortifying of our luſts: *Sinners with their own hands muſt pull out their own eyes.* 'Tis not enough to cry unto God for help, and in the mean time to be careleſs and idle, as if nothing were to be done on our part: *mortification* is a work incumbent upon us, although we are impowred thereunto by the Spirit: *If ye through the ſpirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13, We muſt mortifie, although by the Spirit; the duty is ours, though the ſtrength be Gods: ſo here, *if thy right eye offend thee, thou thy ſelf pluck it out, and caſt it from thee.* Rom. 8. 13.

2. That we muſt be a willing people in this, as in all other duties: *a Chriſtian dieth to ſin, is not put to death.*

2. 'Tis not ſaid, if thine *eye* offend thee, obſerve it more than ordinary, look narrowly to it, but *pluck it out*. To note, that nothing leſs is like to do our ſouls good, than the mortifying, the killing, the cutting off of our corruptions. Let a mans *hand* be cut off, it is a dead member immediately. It is not ſo with *plants* when they are cut off from their roots, they will grow and ſprout again: and ſo it is with the moſt *inferiour* ſort of *ſenſitive* creatures; for inſtance, cut *worms* into ſeverel pieces, every part will live, and ſtir; hence the Learned call them *inſecta*. When the head of a *fowl* is ſeparated from its body, it will live and flutter for ſome time: but this cannot be ſaid of the moſt noble creatures, this is a ſure rule in nature, *Unitas & indiviſibilitas eſt comes perfectionis; multitude,*

titudo, & diviſibilitas, imperfectionis. Union is a ſign of perfection, diviſibility of imperfection: the more perfect any being is, the more united it is to its ſelf, and the leſs any part of it can live *niſi in toto*, but in the whole: ſo that this phraſe is a great elegancy, to note the killing of our beloved luſts, *if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*, &c.

3. 'Tis not only ſaid *pluck it out*, but *caſt it from thee*; to note, that it is not enough for a man to leave his ſin for the preſent, but he muſt *renounce it* for ever. We muſt not part with ſin, as with a friend, with a purpoſe to ſee it again, and to have the ſame familiarity with it, as before, or poſſibly greater. *Amantium ira amoris redintegratio eſt*, the falling out of Lovers is the renewing of love. We muſt not only ſhake hands *with it*, but ſhake our hands *of it*, as *Paul* did ſhake the Viper off his hand, into the fire: *pluck it out, and caſt it from thee.*

Thus much for the *Explication* of the words, for I ſhall have occaſion only to deal with the former part of theſe two Verſes at this time.

2. I am to give the *Obſervations*, I ſhall ſpeak but a few words to ſome of them, that I may reſerve my ſelf, for that which I mainly intend.

1. *Obſervation.*

That the eye and the hand are excellent, and uſeful parts of the body of man.

You ſee here our Saviour ſingles out theſe from all other parts, as being very precious, *if thy right eye offend thee*, &c. *If thy right hand offend thee*, &c.

1. As for the *eye*, our Saviour tells us, that it is *the light of the body*: Mat. 6. 22, *the light of the body is the eye*: what is the world without the Sun, but a dark melancholly dungeon? what is a man without eyes, but monſtrous and deformed, *monſtrum horrendum informe, cui lumen ademptum*: the two eyes are two luminaries, that God hath ſet up in the *Microcoſm*, mans little World: when God would expreſs his tender love unto his people, he calls them *the apple of his eye*; *he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*: and the like phraſe St. *Paul* makes uſe of, when he ſpeaks of the love of the *Galatians* unto himſelf, *I bear you record, that if it had been poſſible, ye would have plucked out your eyes, and have given them to me.* I have read of the Emperour *Adrian*, that with an Arrow, by accident, put out one of his ſervants eyes; he commands him to be brought to him, and bids him ask what he would, that he might make him amends: the poor man was ſilent: he preſſed him again: he told the Emperour, he would ask nothing, but he wiſhed that he had the *eye* which he had loſt; intimating that an Emperour was not able to make ſatisfaction for the loſs of an *eye*.

Zech. 2. 8.

Gal. 4. 15.

Oh be very watchful over this excellent part! *make a covenant with your eyes*, Job 31. 1. *Shut your eyes from ſeeing evil*, Iſa. 33. 15. *Set no wicked thing before your eyes*, Pſal. 101. 3. as the Apoſtle ſaith in another caſe, *Doth not nature even teach you?* God hath made a covering for the

eye,

eye, that opens and ſhuts with a great deal of eaſineſs, to teach us, that it is expedient ſometimes that the *eye* be cloſed, and not holden open to every object.

2. As for the *hand:* it is the prime part for action, *Ariſtotle* calls it ὄργανον ὀργάνων, an inſtrument of inſtruments: without this, there could be no Cities, no Towns, no Merchandize, no Husbandry, no Manufactures; without this, man would differ but a little from the *beaſts that periſh*; for what would his *reaſon* ſtand him in ſtead, if he had not an hand to improve it? The *Naturaliſts* obſerve, that man could neither do nor ſay, without this uſeful and neceſſary part: for if a man did not eat with his hands, he muſt, as a *brute*, feed with his mouth, and by that means the lips would become ſo thick, that he would not be able to ſpeak with any diſtinctneſs; and indeed we find by experience, that they that have thick lips, have an imperfection in their ſpeech.

Oh improve this excellent part for God; a good life is expreſſed in Scripture, by a *clean hand: cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and puriſie your hearts ye double minded*: it is the greateſt abſurdity imaginable to plead a good heart, as many do, and yet have a foul and wicked hand: this is as if a man ſhould ſay, here's a tree that bears ill fruit, but it hath an excellent root. Jam. 4. 8.

2. *Obſervation.*

That offences are from our ſelves: or, *the cauſe of ſtumbling and falling is from our ſelves:* ſome luſt or other, ſome *right-eye ſin*, or ſome *right-hand ſin*; *if thy right eye offend thee*, &c. Sin unmortified will very much endanger a mans falling: truly if you would not have your *right eye*, or your *right hand offend* you, you muſt *offend* them: *pluck it out, and caſt it from thee*; *cut it off and caſt it from thee*, if you will ſee clearly in Gods way, ye muſt pluck out your *right eye*; if you would walk evenly in Gods path, you muſt cut off your *right foot*.

3. *Obſervation.*

That ſin is properly, and to all intents and purpoſes our own.

If thy right eye offend thee, &c. *if thy right hand offend thee*, &c. the Apoſtle writing to the *Coloſſians*, ſpeaks thus, *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate affection*, &c. theſe ſins were their *members:* the whole *body* of ſin is ours, and the *members* of that *body* are ours; there is a great difference between our *natural body*, and our *ſinful body:* our *natural body*, is ours *quoad uſum*, with reference to our uſe; but it is Gods, *quam creationem*, with reference to its *creation*. The body of man was originally and fundamentally *created:* now there is a twofold *Creation*. Col. 3. 5.

1. When a being is made of nothing, this is called by the Learned *creatio immediata*, an *immediate creation*.

2. When a being is made of ſomething, but that ſomething is *materia inhabilis*, matter altogether indiſpoſed for the producing of that effect, and ſo is little, if any thing more than nothing, with reference unto that which is made: *materia eſt aliquid in ſe, nihil tamen reſpectu opificii:* thus when God made the woman of a Rib, when Chriſt turned water into wine,

wine, when God made man of the dust of the earth, it was a *creation*, and this is called by the Learned, *creatio mediata*, a *mediate creation*, and our *natural body* still in a way of generation is Gods creature, but our *sinful body* is our creature: hence the Apostle, *mortifie your members which are on the earth*; and our Saviour in the Text, *If thy right eye offend thee*, &c. so that *sin is properly and to all intents and purposes our own.*

4. *Observation.*

That although all sins are our own, yet there are some sins that in a more especial manner may be called ours; namely, our *right-eye sins*, and our *right-hand sins*: or if you will, *Every man hath his proper, particular iniquity, his beloved sin.*

If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: and the handling of this Doctrine will suit the *Case* that is my task this morning, *viz. How may beloved lusts be discovered and mortified?*

In the prosecution of this *Observation*, I shall follow, by Gods assistance, this method.

1. I shall enquire why sin is expressed sometimes in Scriptures, by the parts and members of our body, as in this place by the *right eye*, and the *right hand.*

2. I shall shew you, that our *right-eye* sins, and our *right-hand* sins, our beloved lusts, may in a more special manner be called *ours*, or that every man hath his proper, his particular iniquity.

3. I shall enquire how this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins.

4. The Use and Application.

1. I am to enquire, why sin in Scripture is expressed by the parts and members of our body, and particularly here by the *right eye*, and the *right hand?*

Rom. 6. 6. 1. You must note that the whole mass of corruption in Scripture, is called by the name of the *old man*, and the *body of sin. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed.* It is called the *old man*: in every young man, there is an old man: and it is called the *body of sin*: now if sin in the lump and bulk, be a *body*, then particular sins may fitly be termed the *parts* and *members* of this body.

2. Sin may be thus expressed; because as the natural body makes use of its several parts, for the managing and carrying on of those works that are *natural*, so corruption makes use of several lusts, for the effecting and promoting of those works that are *sinful.*

3. According to their notion, that hold the soul by creation, as I conceive, sin is conveyed into the soul at first by means of the body. Certainly the soul of man is pure, and undefiled, as it comes out of the hand of God. I do humbly propose to men of learning, whether that rule *corporeum non agit in incorporeum*, or that a body cannot defile a spirit, is not further to be taken into consideration. We find by experience, that as the soul communicates its affections unto the body, the liveless

lump

lump of clay: So the body again hath a very great influence on the ſoul, and can, and doth communicate its diſtempers unto it. For *inſtance*, thoſe that have *ſanguine* bodies, are enclined to luſt; thoſe that are *cholerick*, unto raſhneſs and paſſion; thoſe that are *melancholly*, unto ſuſpition, and tenaciouſneſs; thoſe that are *phlegmatick*, unto dulneſs and cowardize. So that ſin may be in the body *diſpoſitive*, before it be enliven'd by the ſoul, though not *formaliter*; my meaning is, the body may have a diſpoſition to defile the ſoul, before it is united unto the ſoul; and if ſo, no wonder if ſin be expreſſed by the parts and members of our body.

4. Corruption looks at, and ſhews it ſelf by the ſinful actions of the *body*, and therefore may have its denomination by the *parts* of it.

Hence it is, that the Apoſtle, when he concluded that the *Jew* and the *Gentile* were both under ſin; to make this manifeſt, he tells the *Romans* how ſin diſcovered it ſelf in the outward man: *Their throat is an open ſepulchre, with their tongues have they uſed deceit, the poyſon of aſps is under their lips*, &c. We read in Scripture of the ſins of the fleſh, as well as of the ſpirit. *Having therefore theſe promiſes dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit*: the ſins of the ſpirit like ſo many plague-ſores break out into the fleſh. Wicked men are all over beſpotted, and be-leopar'd with ſin: Lying is a ſpot in the tongue, pride is a ſpot in the eye, wrath a ſpot on the brow, bribery a ſpot in the hand, Idolatry is a ſpot on the knee, yea, they are called *ſpots and blemiſhes*, 2 Pet. 2. 13. not *ſpotted*, but *ſpots*: ſin it ſelf is a *ſpot*, and like fire, it turns the ſubject it hath to deal with, into its own nature. One part of the body in Scripture is called a *world* of iniquity. *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: How much iniquity is in the world, when in this little member there is a world of iniquity!* Rom. 3. 13, &c. 2 Cor. 7. 1. Jam. 3. 6.

Thus much ſhall ſuffice to have been ſpoken to the firſt thing propounded, *viz.* why ſin is expreſſed ſometimes in Scripture, by the *parts* and *members* of our body.

My ſecond work is to ſhew you, that our *right-eye* ſins, and our *right-hand* ſins, our beloved luſts, may in a more eſpecial manner be called *ours*; or that every man hath his proper, his particular iniquity: *If thy right eye offend thee*, &c. *If thy right hand offend thee*, &c. Look as it is with good men, though they have the *ſeeds* of every grace in them, yet ſome one may be ſaid to be theirs in an eminent manner: *Abraham* was eminent for *obedience*; *Moſes* for *meekneſs*, *Job* for *patience*: Thus it is with wicked men, though they have the *ſeed* of every ſin in them, yet ſome one may be ſaid to be theirs in an eſpecial manner. Wicked men in Scripture are as it were *marked* out for ſeveral ſins, *calculo nigro*: *Cain* for his *Murder*; *Simon* and *Levi* for their *Treachery*; *Corah* and his company for their *Conſpiracy*; *Nebuchadnezzar* for his *Pride*; *Manaſſes* for his *Cruelty*; *Balaam* for his *Covetouſneſs*: or look as it is in the natural body, though every man hath blood, flegme, choler, melancholy, yet ſome humour or other is predominant, from which a man hath its denomination,

nomination; so 'tis in the sinful body, some sinful humour or other hath the predominancy: most men have some *peccatum in deliciis*, some sweet morsel, that they roll under their tongne, which they will by no means spit out, or part with. It would be no hard matter to shew you, that several nations have their proper and peculiar sins, as the *Spaniard* theirs, the *French* theirs, the *Dutch* theirs. Look into the Scripture and you will find that the *Corinthians* had their sin, which is thought to be *wantonness*, and *uncleanness*; and therefore the *Apostle*, in the Epistles that he writes to them, uses so many pressing arguments against this sin. The *Cretians* are branded for *Lyars*; the *Jews* for *Idolaters:* So your *Towns* have their sins, *Villages* theirs, *Cities* theirs; possibly *London*'s sin may be loathing spiritual Manna, neglect and contempt of the Gospel, a non-improvement of Ordinances.

3. I am to enquire, How this comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins?

1. Men have particular *temperaments* and *constitutions* of body, and therefore they have their particular sins suitable to their *temperaments* and *constitutions:* you heard before, particular *temperaments* enclined men several ways. Creatures in the general are naturally delighted with those things, which are fitted, suited and accommodated to the *genius* and *frame* of their respective natures. As in the same Plant, the *Bee* feedeth on the *flower*, the *Bird* on the *seed*, the *Sheep* on the *blade*, the *Swine* on the *root:* the same seeds are not proper for the *sand*, and for the *clay*. Every thing thrives most where it likes best: so 'tis in this case, that sin is like to thrive most in the soul, that we make most of, that we are most delighted in, that suits best our *complexions* and *constitutions*. We must be careful here, lest we strain this too far, with some *Physicians* and *Epicureans*, that hold the *soul* to be nothing else but the *temper* of the body: but questionless this hath a very great influence on the better part. Hence some have adjudged it not fit, for *illegitimate* persons to be admitted into *Ecclesiastical* orders: and you know under the Law, by the appointment of God himself, *a bastard was not to enter into the Congregation, to the tenth generation.*

And I humbly conceive, that a toleration of unclean mixtures, is not only against *Religion*, but against principles of *Polity* and Government: the children of filthy persons, for the most part proving degenerate, ignoble, lascivious, and by that means become the blemishes, the ulcers, the plague-sores of the body-politique, Kingdom and State whereunto they do belong.

2. There are distinct and peculiar periods of times, *distinct and peculiar ages*, that encline to *peculiar sins*; for instance, *childhood* enclines to *levity* and *inconstancy*, *youth* to *wantonness* and *prodigality*, *manhood* to *pride* and *stateliness*, *old age* to *frowardness:* you know diseases make men fretful; now *ipsa senectus morbus*, old age it self is a disease: If we take not heed, the sinful body will grow strong, when the natural body grows weak. I have heard of a good woman, something inclinable to passion, that used to say, I must strive against peevishness when I am young, or else what will

will become of me when I am old? And ſo *Covetouſneſs* is a ſin, that *old age* is very much addicted to. *Windelin* in his Moral Philoſophy, *cap.* 25. diſcourſes learnedly, *Cur ſenes ſint magis avari quam juvenes?* when God is taking people out of the world, they cling faſt about it, and cry, *loth to depart*; truly this is no good ſign. You know men that are a-ſinking, and in a deſperate caſe, lay hold on any thing.

3. Men have diſtinct and *particular callings*, that encline them to *particular ſins:* For inſtance, a *Souldiers* employment puts him upon *rapine* and *violence*. And therefore *John* the *Baptiſt*, when the *Souldiers* demanded of him, *what ſhall we do?* tells them, *Do violence to no man, neither accuſe any falſely, and be content with your wages.* Luk. 3. 14. *A Tradeſmans* employment puts him upon *lying*, *deceiving*, *over-reaching his brother: Miniſters*, upon the account of pleaſing the *beſt*, as we many times *Catachreſtically* call them, or the *greateſt* of the Pariſh; are tempted to *flattery*, to *pleaſe men*, to *ſow pillows under their peoples elbows. Magiſtrates* and *Judges* are tempted to *bribery* and *injuſtice*; if great care be not taken, their very calling and office may prove a ſnare upon that account.

4. Men have diſtinct and *particular ways* of *breeding* and *education*, and upon that account have their *particular ſins*. The child that hears his Father and Mother ſwear, is like to ſwear too. That child that hath frequently wine, and ſtrong drink given to it by the Parents, when it is young, 'tis likely may get a ſmatch of it, and love to it, and ſo prove intemperate, when it is old. *Joſeph* by living in the Court of *Pharaoh*, learned to ſwear the Court-oath. Man is ζῶον μίμικον a creature very much given to imitation. Examples have a very great influence on men, both in reference to vertues and vices, eſpecially to the latter; we catch ſickneſs one of another, but we do not catch health: For inſtance, the Scripture ſpeaking of the ſon of *Jeroboam*, tell us, *That he did that which was evil in the ſight of the Lord, as his fathers had done, he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.* 2 Regū 15. 9. He writ after his Father's copy, and therefore the ſins of his Father in a particular manner is taken notice of by the Spirit of God in that place. So 2 *Sam.*6.20, you have an account of *Michals* jeering of *David*, becauſe he danced before the *Ark*, and you will find that ſhe is called there not the *Wife* of *David*, but the *Daughter* of *Saul*. And *Michal the Daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and ſaid, How glorious was the King of Iſrael to day, who uncovered himſelf to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his ſervants, as one of the vain fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth himſelf!* Now why is ſhe called there the *Daughter* of *Saul?* becauſe ſhe had learned this wickedneſs from her father: We have woful experience of this in our days. Formerly people could ſay, *Pſal.* 44. 1, *We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what works thou didſt in their days, in the times of old.* Truly the people of this generation may ſay, we heard our fathers ſwear, and curſe, and ſcoff, and mock at the ways of God; in reaſon we may expect mens manners to ſute their *education*.

2 Sam. 6. 20.

Pſal. 44. 1.

Thus much ſhall ſuffice to have been ſpoken to the third particular pro-

pounded to be discussed, that is to say, how it comes to pass, that particular persons have their proper and particular sins: and thus much also for the *doctrinal part.*

4. The fourth and last thing is the *Use* and *Application* of this to our selves.

Use 1.

For *Lamentation* and *Humiliation* in the presence of God this day: we trouble our selves about other mens sins, Magistrates sins, Ministers sins, as the *Pharisee, Lord, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, an Extortioner, an Adulterer,* &c. *or as this Publican.*

And in the mean time, where is the man that considers his own iniquity, his *right-eye sin,* or his *right-hand sin:* there are great outcries amongst us, what have others done? but who smites upon his thigh, and says, *What have I done? We search every where, save where our Rachel sits upon her Idol.*

Possibly some poor soul may say, Did I know this particular sin, this *right-eye sin,* or this *right-hand sin,* the Lord knows, I would quickly *pluck out* the one, and *cut off* the other, and that brings me to

Use 2.

Of Examination, how this sin may be discovered; now to this purpose, take these marks, or rules.

1. It may be known by the *loves* and *tender respects* the sinner bears unto this *sin:* strong love for the most part, hath but one single object; affections are like the Sun-beams in a burning glass, the more united they are in one point, the more fervent: A wicked man hath a particular affection for his particular lust. As *Abraham* cryed, *O that Ishmael may live in thy sight!* So a wicked man, oh that this sin may be spared! This is his *Benjamin:* the soul is ready to say, here is one sin must be plucked out, and here is another sin must be cut off, and must this beloved Lust die also? all these things are against me. The sinner seems to repent of sin, and to condemn sin, and himself for sin: but when the time of Execution comes, the man is very tender-hearted; here's a reprieve for this sin, and there is a pardon for another sin; oh it goes against him to cut the throat of his darling lust! (*'Tis a woful case when a man will undertake to pardon his own sin:* this is *crudelitas parcens, sparing-cruelty*); and if it fall out, that his *beloved* sin die a natural death, that is, if the Adulterer, for instance, cannot actually engage in bodily uncleanness, as formerly, upon the account of old age, he follows it to the grave, as we do our dear friends, and heartily mourns that he and his *dear* lust must part.

2. It may be known thus; that sin that *distracts* us most in *holy duties,* is our beloved sin: you may know that cold is natural to the water, and that it likes that *quality* best, because let it be made never so hot, it will be still working it self to its own proper temper. Souls possibly may sometimes

ſometimes be warmed at an Ordinance, but they quickly cool again, and are ſtill working towards their *proper* luſt, the ſin they like beſt. You may take notice in Scripture, that God, to ſpeak after the manner of men, in an eſpecial manner, *remembers* the ſins of wicked men in the performance of holy duties. *They ſacrifice fleſh for the ſacrifices of mine offering,* Hoſ. 8. 13. *and eat it, but the Lord accepteth them not. Now will he remember their iniquity, and viſit their ſins*; as if a Felon or Murderer convict, ſhould eſcape out of priſon, and afterwards preſume to come into the preſence of the Judg: this brings his Felony or Murder into remembrance: and herein their puniſhment is *viſible ſin. They remember their ſins in their duties, and ſo will God.* The people of God themſelves are tainted with this. *Pride* was the *Diſciples* maſter-ſin; and whilſt they were healing Diſeaſes, and caſting Devils out of other mens bodies, the proud Devil was ſtirring in their own ſouls: and our Saviour gives them a rebuke for that, *Luk.* 10. 20. *In this rejoyce not, that ſpirits are ſubject unto you; but* Luk. 10. 20. *rather rejoyce, becauſe your names are written in heaven.*

3. It may be known by its domination, its commanding-power over all other ſins: look as there is a kind of government in Hell, ſuch an one as it is: *Beelzebub* is called the *Prince of Devils*; ſo in a wicked mans ſoul, one ſin or other is ſtill uppermoſt, and keeps the throne: all other ſins do as it were bow the knee to this ſin, hold up the train of this ſin: are obedient ſervants to this ſin; it ſays to one, *go, and it goes*; and to another *come, and it comes:* for inſtance, if *covetouſneſs* be the beloved ſin, lying, and deceiving, and injurious dealing will ſerve that: If *Ambition*, temporizing and ſinful compliance will ſerve that: If *Adultery*, ſinful waſting of time, and eſtate, and body, will ſerve that. If *Vain-glory* be the *Phariſees* great ſin, *devouring widows houſes under pretence of long prayers*, will ſerve that. As it is with a mans body, when it is hurt or maimed, all the ill humors will flow to the part that is ill affected. Hence it is, when a man is firſt wounded, he feels but a little pain, becauſe he ſuffers only upon the ſingle account of the diviſion of the part: but afterwards the pain is encreaſed, for then he ſuffers doubly, upon the account of the diviſion of the part, as alſo by the conflux of ill humours. When the ſoul hath received ſome gaſh, ſome hurt more than ordinary by its *particular* ſin, all the ſinful humours will make haſte to feed that iniquity: ſo that this is the ſin that carries it, and bears the ſway in the ſoul. In a word: the ſinner hath the curſe of *Cham* as it were pronounced upon him: a ſervant of ſervants is he; his other ſins are ſervants to his *beloved* ſin, and he himſelf is a ſlave to them all.

4. That ſin that *Conſcience* in a particular manner doth chide a man for, that 'tis likely may be his *particular* ſin; the *Greek* word for Conſcience is *συνείδησις*, it ſignifies a joint knowledg, or knowledg with another. It takes notice of things together with God. Conſcience is Gods *deputy*, Gods *ſpy*, Gods *intelligencer* (pardon the word) in our boſoms, an exact *notary*, of whatever we think or do, a *co-witneſs* with God, as St. *Paul* is bold to call it, *Rom.* 9. 1. Now wouldſt thou know thy

beloved ſin? hearken to the voice of *Conſcience:* doth that condemn thee for pride, for paſſion, for worldlineſs, for perſecuting the ways of God? Oh remember, it is Gods *Viceroy*, honour it ſo far as to weigh, and conſider throughly what it ſaith; 'tis likely, this may be thy *particular* ſin, that which diſhonours God moſt, if *Conſcience* be any thing tender will, trouble thee moſt: many a man deals with his Conſcience, as *Felix* did with *Paul*, hearken to it a while, whilſt it tells them of their leſſer faults, or that they are ſinners in the general; but when it rebukes them for their *darling* luſt, though they cannot ſay, *Go thy way*, as *Felix* to *Paul*, yet hold thy peace, and when *I have a convenient ſeaſon* I will give thee the hearing.

5. It may be known, by being *impatient* of reproof. *Herod hears John Baptiſt gladly*, till he preached againſt his *Herodias:* this is a *noli me tangere*; touch me not. The *Plant-animal*, or the ſenſible Plant, ſo called, when it is touched, ſhrinks up, and contracts it ſelf; the ſinner ſhrinks when he is touched in the ſore place. The *eye* is a tender part, and apt to be *offended* if you meddle with it. This is the reaſon why people are enraged againſt a powerful, ſoul-ſearching, ſoul-ſaving Miniſtry: moſt men are for Mountebanks, and Quackſalvers, that make uſe altogether of Lenitives, and healing Plaiſters, but as for your faithful Chyrurgeons, that according to Art, will probe and ſearch, and cleanſe the Wound, they cannot away with them: *I hate him*, ſaith *Ahab* of *Micajah*, *He never propheſies good concerning me, but evil:* only I ſhall add this, that man, eſpecially that Miniſter that reproves another for his ſins, had need to be blameleſs as much as may be himſelf: Thus the Apoſtle intimates, *Thou which teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf?* That man that is a teacher of others, ſhould teach himſelf ſo much the more; we teach others when we deliver unto them Rules and Precepts, unto which they are to conform; we teach our ſelves, when we obey thoſe Rules, *Thou that preacheſt a man ſhould not ſteal, doſt thou ſteal? thou that ſayeſt a man ſhould not commit adultery, doſt thou commit adultery?* &c. that man that hath a beam in his own eye, is not likely to pull out the mote that is in his brothers.

Rom. 2. 21, 22.

6. It may be known by this: it makes a man notoriouſly *partial* in his own caſe: *David* could allow himſelf another mans *Wife*, and could condemn one to death, for taking away another mans *Lamb*.

7. It may be known, by the *covers*, and cloaks, and *fair pretences*, that the ſinner hath for this ſin. Uncleanneſs and Intemperance are but tricks of youth, and ſowing his wild Oats: Luxury is Magnificence, Covetouſneſs is good husbandry, pride is a Piece of nobleneſs, and grandure of ſpirit: yea, which is more, 'tis Humility; you have ſome that diſparage themſelves in company, and they call this humility, when in truth it is the height of their ſpirits; like the Archer that draws back the arrow, that it may fly ſo much the higher, and ſo much the further. 'Tis ſtrange blindneſs, or deceit, or both, to call not yellow, or ſome middle colour, but black white: yet thus it is with many; they ſhape their darling luſt, like thoſe vertues unto which they are extreamly contrary.

Every

Every wicked man is ſins advocate, and will plead its cauſe *gratis*. Oh ſaith *Judas*, to what purpoſe is this waſte? *This oyntment might have been ſold for much, and given to the poor: this he ſaid*, ſaith another *Evangeliſt, Not that he cared for the poor, but becauſe he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.* Beware of ſpeaking any thing towards the juſtification of your ſelves in any way of wickedneſs: you know the Malefactor is condemned before he is put to death, and ſo it is in the caſe of ſin, *cum peccator juſtificatur, peccatum condemnatur*; when a ſinner is juſtified, his ſin is condemned, and after condemnation followeth execution: *Job* vindicates himſelf in this particular: *If I covered my tranſgreſſions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquities in my boſom*, &c then *let thiſtles grow inſtead of wheat*: as if he had ſaid, I did not hide mine iniquity as *Adam* did, I did not cover my tranſgreſſion, I was open and ingenuous: the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered*, but then it muſt be by Gods hand, not ours. Mat. 26. 8, 9. Joh. 12. 6. Job 31. 33, 40.

8. If there be any one ſin more than other, that the ſoul doth *readily cloſe with*, that is its *beloved* ſin: its *right eye* ſin, or its *right-hand* ſin. *Sampſon*, when all the world could not take away his ſtrength, is eaſily perſwaded by *Dalilah*. See how *Solomon* expreſſes the Harlots dealing with the young man: *with much fair ſpeech ſhe cauſed him to yield: with the flattering of her lips ſhe forced him*: the moſt ſhe could do was to *flatter* him, and yet notwithſtanding it is ſaid, ſhe *forced* him: ſin works altogether by enticement; *Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own luſt, and enticed*; yet it is ſo powerful, that it amounts to a *force*, as the requeſt of a King amounts unto a command. Prov. 7. 21. Jam. 1. 14.

9. That ſin which a man wiſhes were *no ſin*, is like to be his *beloved* ſin: the caſe of the young man in the Goſpel is conſiderable to this purpoſe: ſaith our Saviour, *If thou wilt be perfect, go ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven, and come follow me.* Verſ. 22, *When the young man heard that ſaying, he went away ſorrowful*; that is, he was very much troubled, that there was ſuch a truth as this, that the world for Chriſts ſake was to be parted with. So *Pſal.* 14. 1, *The fool hath ſaid in his heart there is no God*: O ſaith the fool, That there was no God, that there was no Heaven, that there was no Hell: *Atheiſm* was the *beloved* ſin in that caſe: firſt men wiſh there were no Deity, and then they judg ſo, and ſay ſo. Carnal affections after ſome time ſettle in opinion and judgment: 'tis poſſible for men by ways of unrighteouſneſs, by a conſtant courſe of cheating and cozening, ſo far to ſhut up and impriſon their natural light, and ſo to muffle their reaſon, and underſtanding, that at length they may cheat and baffle their own ſouls, and think it a piece of juſtice and righteouſneſs ſo to do. Mat. 19. 21, 22. Pſal. 14. 1.

10. That ſin which we think of *firſt* in the morning, and laſt in the evening, is like to be our *beloved* ſin. God is the chiefeſt good, the prime object of our love: and therefore he is *Alpha* and *Omega* in himſelf, ſo he

he is a ſo unto his people, the beginning and the end, the firſt, and the
Pſal. 139. 18. laſt: they begin the day with him, *Pſal.* 139. 18, *When I awake, I am*
Cant. 3. 1. *ſtill with thee:* they end the day with him, thus the Spouſe, *Cant.* 3. 1, *By night on my bed I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth:* you have mention
Iſa. 26. 9. of both theſe, *Iſa.* 26. 9, *With my ſoul have I deſired thee in the night, yea, with my ſpirit within me, will I ſeek thee early.* Now this ſin that I am treating of, like that ἄνομος, that lawleſs perſon that we read of
2 Theſ. 2. 8. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 8. *that man of ſin,* Verſ. 3. oppoſeth and exalteth its ſelf in the ſoul *above all that is called God,* and ſitteth on the *ſeat of God.* A beloved luſt is uſually the ſinners firſt and laſt; he gives it entertainment firſt in the morning, and takes his leave of it laſt in the evening: yea, this darling ſin muſt be entertained and made much on in the Bed-chamber:
Pſal. 36. 4. the Pſalmiſt ſpeaking of a wicked man, *Pſal.* 36. 4. tells us, he deviſeth miſchief on his bed: for the moſt part *that is a very friend, that we admit to our bed ſides.*

11. That ſin which moſt infeſts us, and troubles us in our *ſolitudes* and *retirements,* that is our *beloved* ſin: my meaning is, when a man is alone, in his Cloſet, or in the Fields, and his thoughts run adrift: that ſin which of themſelves they move towards, and cloſe with, that may be his beloved ſin; the current of the ſoul is that way. O Chriſtian, mark the workings of thy heart in private, and thou mayſt poſſibly make ſome diſcoveries. When a man retires himſelf into ſome ſolitary place, it is uſually abſurd to trouble him: 'tis a friend indeed, that falls in with him, and offers his company in that caſe: *That ſin is more than ordinarily beloved by us, that interpoſes in our privacies.*

12. And laſtly, that ſin, that we are willing to endure greateſt *hardſhips* and *ſufferings* for, that is our *beloved* ſin: for inſtance, ſuppoſe *Covetouſneſs* be the darling ſin, what baſe, abſurd, unreaſonable offices will it put a man upon: how ſcraping, and nigardly and dunghil-like will that man live, in his Town, or in his Pariſh; and expoſe himſelf to ſcorn and contempt from every one that knows him? Suppoſe *Ambition* be the beloved ſin, how will a man in that caſe ſwear and forſwear, and temporize, and like the Boat-men, look one way and row another; almoſt any thing for preferment? If *Uncleanneſs* be the mans particular ſin, how will he deſtroy his body, diſgrace his name, overthrow his eſtate, for the gratifying of his luſt? I dare aver, that the worſt and baſeſt drudgery imaginable, to ſcoure Kettels and Diſhes, to tug at the Oar, to dig at the Mine, are honourable employments, in compariſon of this.

Uſe 3.

Is for Exhortation and Direction, to preſs you to the mortification of your *beloved* ſin, and ſhew you how it may be mortified: let me take
Col 3. 5. up that Scripture again, *mortifie your members which are upon the earth,* that is, let every ſin be mortified; for you muſt know, as death is to the members of the *natural* body, ſo is mortification to the members of the

the *ſinful* body. Now in death the ſoul is ſeparated, not only from one member, as it is in a *paralyſis*, or numb Palſey, but from all, even from the principal parts of the body, as well as others: ſo 'tis in ſpiritual death, there is a ſeparation of the ſoul, not only from this or that ſinful *member*, but from the whole *body* of ſin, from the principal parts and members of this body, as well as others: the *right eye* is dead, the *right hand* is dead, it muſt needs be ſo, the one is *pluckt out*, and the other is *cut off*.

A Chriſtian muſt deal by his darling luſt, as the *Iſraelites* dealt by *Adonibezek*, *they cut off his thumbs, and his great toes:* ſo muſt thou deal with this ſin, hack it, maim it, that it may not be able to go nor ſtand, nor act, nor ſtir, if it were poſſible: and for that purpoſe take theſe directions.

1. Labour to have your heart ſteeled with an holy *courage* and *reſolution* againſt this ſin: it is upon the account of baſeneſs and cowardlineſs of ſpirit, that people fall by the right hand of their ſpiritual enemy: ſhall I give you ſome inſtances for this? doth the Devil tempt thee to *uncleanneſs*, is that thy *right-eye* ſin, or thy *right-hand* ſin? take up St. *Pauls* reſolution, *Shall I take the members of Chriſt, and make them the members of an harlot?* μὴ γένοιτο, *God forbid*; *Joſephs* reſolution, *How ſhall I do this wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* Doth the Devil tempt thee to *blaſphemy*, or to *perjury*, or to *lying*, or to any other ſin of that nature? take up the *Pſalmiſts* reſolution, *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways, that I ſin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked are before me.* Art thou tempted to *Idolatry*, to deny the truths of Chriſt, to make ſhipwrack of faith, and a good Conſcience? take up the *three Childrens* reſolution, *Be it known unto thee, oh King, that we will not ſerve thy gods, nor worſhip the golden image which thou haſt ſet up.* Every man ſhould be a *Prince* over his luſts, and like *Joſhuah's* Captains, ſhould put his feet upon the necks of them: here courage, reſolution ſeverity is very ſucceſsful: and in ſpecial, exerciſe your revenge on your beloved luſt: *fight not againſt ſmall, or great* comparatively, but againſt this *kingly*, this *maſter* ſin.

1 Cor. 6. 15. Gen. 39. 9. Pſal. 39. 1. Dan. 3. 18.

2. Let your repentance be *particular* for your *particular* iniquity: it is not enough to confeſs your ſins, in the lump, in the general, but in prayer you muſt take particular notice of your *right-eye* ſin, your *right-hand* ſin: thus *David* was *particular* in his repentance, *Againſt thee, thee only have I ſinned, and done this evil in thy ſight:* this evil of murder, and this evil of Adultery, *pointing* as it were with the *finger* to *particular* ſins. *Zacheus* makes a particular confeſſion of that *wrong* and *injuſtice*, that he had been guilty of: *Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man, by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him fourfold:* this particle *if* in that place, may not be a note of *doubting*, or *ſuſpition: if I have taken*, that is, ſeeing I have taken from men by falſe accuſation; *ſi Deus eſt animus*, ſeeing God is a Spirit.

Pſal. 51. 4. Luk. 19. 8.

3. Beware of thoſe things that may *occaſion* the commiſſion of this ſin:

ſin: for inſtance, if thou art prone to the ſin of lying, *keep a door before thy lips:* if to gluttony and drunkenneſs, *when thou goeſt to a feaſt, put a knife to thy throat.* We uſe to ſay proverbially, *Occaſion makes a thief*; this is true alſo in other caſes, occaſion makes a lyar: occaſion makes a drunkard; it is a ſign of a naughty heart to dally with occaſions to ſin:
Prov. 23. 31. *Look not thou upon the wine,* ſaith *Solomon, when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright:* It is not ſimply unlawful to look upon wine in the glaſs; but if this may occaſion intemperance, here is a law laid upon our looks: that command which forbids a ſin, forbids alſo thoſe things that have a tendency thereunto, as is obſerved by learned *Commentators* on the *Decalogue*; ſometimes this is expreſſed in Scripture: the Commandment that forbids *Adultery*, takes in all cauſes and occaſions thereunto: thus *Solomon* ſpeaking of an Harlot, Prov. 5. 8, *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe:* Harlots, like peſtilential diſeaſes, make the houſes infectious where they are, and therefore *come not nigh the door of her houſe,* 1 Theſ. 5. 22, *Avoid all apperance of evil:* I know there are ſome that diſlike the tranſlation of εἶδος by *appearance*, and rather think it ſhould be expounded *ſort* or *kind*; but whether the word be taken in a *Logical* notion, in the whole book of God is very queſtionable; and therefore why we ſhould depart from the current and ſtream of Expoſitors, and the ſenſe of our learned Tranſlators, I know not. When God would forbid the ſin of *injuſtice*, ſelling wares by falſe weights, mark how it is expreſſed,
Deut. 25. 13. *Thou ſhalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a ſmall.* It was a ſin not only to ſell wares by one ſort of weights, and take wares in by another: but to have *a great, and a ſmall weight in his bag.* God would not have us come near the ſin of injuſtice. Hence alſo is that caution of
1 Joh. 5. 21. St. *John, Little children, keep your ſelves from Idols*; if you would avoid Idolatry, beware of Idols, *he that would not hear the Bell, muſt not meddle with the Rope.*

4. Pray unto God, that thou mayſt not fall into ſuch a condition, as may *draw forth* that corruption that thou art moſt prone to: this was that which undid *Judas*, he was naturally enclined to unjuſt gain, and he had the Office of carrying the bag; and thus his luſt was *drawn forth.* When a man is apt to be high-minded, it is a ſnare to be in an high place: when a man is paſſionate, it is ſad to converſe always or moſtly with thoſe, that are kindle-coals, that by provocations and unworthy carriages, are caſting fire-balls into a mans ſoul, and he having a gun-powder-nature, is in a flame preſently. And the nearer the relations in this caſe the worſe. It is ſad when my next neighbours houſe is on fire, but 'tis worſe when mine own is on fire: it is a promiſe made to the people of God, that all conditions of life, and all paſſages of providence, ſhall work together for their good; and further, on the contrary, when our conditions and relations make for the worſe, eſpecially with reference unto our ſouls, it muſt needs be very ſad.

5. Learn to *ſuſpect* things that are *delightful*, Gen. 3. 6, *The woman ſaw that the tree was good for food, and that is was pleaſant to the eyes.*

Carnal

Carnal pleaſures are forbidden fruit: *Agrippina* poyſoned her Husband in that meat he loved beſt: the Devil tempts us with diſhes ſweetly poyſoned. *Love and delight, pari paſſu ambulant,* walk together, and keep the ſame pace: many a man hath been undone by riches and honours, and worldly comforts, *like the Bee that is drowned in its own honey.* Chriſtians be careful: *Every one of us hath* Eves *ſweet tooth in our heads.*

6. Labour to act that *grace* in eſpecial manner, which is *contrary* to thy *beloved* ſin: for inſtance, if *paſſion* be thy darling ſin, labour to act the grace of *meekneſs*; if *exceſs*, the grace of *temperance*; if *uncleanneſs*, the grace of *chaſtity*: let me tell you, where grace is helped by nature, upon the account of a mans temper and conſtitution, there a little grace will go far: but when grace is to be employed againſt nature, it had need to be ſtrong and active: your Watermen in ſome caſes take their eaſe, and their Boats will go of themſelves; but when wind and tide is againſt them, then they muſt labour at the Oar, *Hic labor, hoc opus.*

7. Keep a watch over thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23, *Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the iſſues of life:* So our Saviour, *Out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Theſts, Falſe Witneſs, Blaſphemy.* Godlineſs is but a fanſie, till the heart be reformed: We read in the book of Pſalms, of *Iſraels* turning unto God: *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him, and they returned, and enquired early after God, and they remembred that God was their rock, and the high God their redeemer:* but was their converſion right? no, Ver. 36, *They did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongue*; and whence was this? Ver. 37, *Their heart was not right with him, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his covenant:* therefore, mortifie ſin in its riſe, in its firſt principle, *lay the axe to the root*, there is more ſap in the root, than in the branches; there is more ſin in the heart, than in the life: one ſtroke at the root of the tree, conduces more to the deadning of it, than many at the body, or the boughs, or any other part whatſoever. Mat. 15. 19. Pſal. 78. 34. 35.

To quicken your induſtry in this, know, that the motions of original ſin, as they are *permanent*, ſo they are exceeding *violent*, and *impetuous*. I remember the Learned *Davenant, de juſtitia habituali & actuali, cap.* 5. gives this difference, between the remiſſion of *actual* and *original* ſin: when *actual* ſins are forgiven, ſaith he, *penitus tolluntur, quoad maculam & reatum*, both as to their *guilt* and *filth*: but it is not ſo with *original* ſin, the *guilt* is done away, but the *ſtain* remains; this is a ſin that *dwells* in us, that abides in us, and abides by us; we ſhall not be rid of the *body of death*, till the *death of the body.* Sin is an ill tenant, it will not out till the houſe fall upon its head: now the certainty of the inherence of this ſin, is an argument of the more efficaciouſneſs of its operation, *modus operandi ſequitur modum eſſendi:* unquenchable fire burns more fervently, than that which may be extinguiſhed; the reaſon why

the *Angels* at this day do the will of God in a more eminent way than the Saints on earth, is, because they have such a principle of holiness, as cannot be lost to Eternity; whereas the Saints on earth have a weaker principle of holiness, which may unhappily be abated, though it be recruited again: the reason why the soul of an healthful person, moves and acts with more vivacity, and energe, and power, than the soul of a sick man, is, because in the latter, it may be departing, and taking its leave of the body, or at least may be in danger so to do; whereas the former, being a man of an hail and good constitution of body, the soul may act, inform, enliven it many years.

8. Get a respect *to all Gods commandments*, Psal. 119. 6, *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.* The reason why men indulge any one lust, is, because they pick and cull their duties, and so indeed serve not the will of God, but their own choice. Oh, how many are there, that answer the Lord with half obedience, like the *echo*, which makes not a perfect respondence of the voice, but of some part thereof? Many make such a difference amongst the *Tables*, as if only one side, or one part were of Gods writing: Oh Sirs, this will not do, this will undo; the man that like *Agrippa*, doth but *almost* believe, *almost* repent, *almost* conform to the will of God, that man shall be saved proportionably, *almost*. One sin unrepented of will cause you to miscarry to all eternity: one crack in a Bell may make it unserviceable, untunable, and till it be new cast, it is good for nothing: one wound may kill your bodies, and so may one sin your souls. Oh Christians, what had become of you and I, if Jesus Christ had satisfied the Justice of God for all but one sin? There is a Text in *Ezekiel*, that
Ezek. 18. 27. is usually taken for a place of the greatest mercy in the whole book of God, *When the wicked turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* You have to the same purpose, *Ver.* 21, 22, of the same *Chapter*, but pray mark what follows, *Ver.* 28, *Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed*, no mercy to be expected from this Scripture, unless a man *turn away from all his transgressions*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 21, the Vessel of honour is distinguished from the Vessel of dishonour, by this character, that *it is sanctified and prepared for*
Luk. 1. 6. *every good work*: and this is the commendation of *Zachary*, and *Elizabeth*, *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless.* Halting in Religion is a troublesome, deformed, dangerous gesture; and there is no cure for this, like *cutting off the right foot.*

9. Lay hold on *Gods strength* for the mortifying of thy *beloved* sin: surely this is no easie work, see how it is expressed in Scripture, sometime it is called the *mortification of our members*; is to mortifie a part of the body an easie work? sometimes the *circumcising of the foreskin of our hearts*, Deut. 10. 16, did the *Sichemites* count Circumcision an easie work? by *crucifying of the affections and lusts*, Gal. 5. 24, was crucifixion

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an easie death? And here in the Text, it is called a *plucking out the right eye*, and *cutting off the right hand*: the Apostle *Paul* in the forementioned place, tells the *Romans*, *if ye through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, you shall live.* He who is the fountain of spiritual life, is also the principle of this spiritual death: this is a work to be done by us, but *through the Spirit.* Hence in Scripture God is said to do this: *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed:* and the Apostle expresses this by *circumcision made without hands:* intimating that it is not a work of mans hands, but Gods. Rom. 8. 13; Deut. 30. 6. Col. 2. 11.

Q. If any ask me, but how shall we lay hold on Gods strength?

A. By *faith:* great things are attributed unto this grace, because it lays hold on God, and sets God at work, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4, *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith:* it overcomes not only the honours, and riches, and pleasures of the world, but the lusts of the world, of which you have mention, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16. Faith is a self emptying grace, a poor beggarly hand, rich only in receiving from another: something like *Davids* sling and stone against *Goliah* lusts: but in the name of the Lord of Hosts, and by his strength, even a babe in Christ through faith shall overcome the world: I must tell you that *Hannibal*, and *Alexander*, and all the glorious Victors that we read of, were but fresh-water Souldiers, in comparison of one that is born of God.

I shall only to what I have said, add a few Motives, to quicken you to your duty, and so commend all to Gods blessing.

Motive 1.

Right-eye sins, and *right-hand* sins are the greatest *hinderances* of the souls closing with Christ. When you flay any creature, the skin comes off with ease, till it comes to the head, and there it sticks, more than ordinary skill is required to get it thence. Now I must tell you, the sin that I am disswading you against, is, not only the *eye*-sin, and the *hand*-sin, but the *head*-sin, and here conversion sticks. The sinner forbears many sins, and performs many duties: but when it comes to this, *Oh master*, saith flesh and blood, *pity thy self*, beware what thou dost; what, be thine own Executioner? *pluck out thy right eye? cut off thy right hand?* A mans sin is himself; to deny ungodliness, is to deny thy self; this is a kind of αὐτοχειρία, self-murder: *No man ever yet hated his own flesh.* Is there no getting to heaven, unless a man leave himself behind? This is *durus sermo*, an hard saying: As *Naaman* the *Syrian*, 2 Reg. 5. 18, *When my master goeth into the house of Rimmon, to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow my self in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing:* So the sinner: *the Lord pardon the servant in this thing.* The young man in the Gospel tells Christ, *That he had kept all the commandments from his youth:* but when Christ said to him, *One thing thou lackest, go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come and take up thy cross and follow me:* Here he sticks: Vers. 22, *He was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions*, or his great possessions had him; Alas, this poor young man Mark. 10. 20, 21,

little thought, that notwithstanding his forwardness to keep the Commandments, he was under the power of worldly lusts. Oh sirs! *there is great strength in a river, when it runs smoothly, and without noise.*

Motive 2.

As these sins are the *greatest hindrances* of the souls closing with Christ, so they prove the *greatest trouble* to the soul afterwards. Your *Eye*-sin will prove your *Eye-sore*, yea, and your *Heart-sore:* My meaning is, your Conscience will suffer most upon the account of this sin all your days. Thus *Job*, cap. 13. 26, *Thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.* When a mans Conscience is disquieted and tormented for the sins of his youth, then he may be said to possess them: yea, it may occasion not only grief, but guilt. Of all sins, this is many times most unmortified, even after Mortification: Souldiers that have received wounds and bruises when young, have smarted by them when they have been old. *There are many good souls, that after cure, have gone to heaven halting on the old maim.*

Motive 3.

The mortifying of our *darling* lust, our *right-eye* sin, and our *right-hand* sin, is a choice evidence of *regeneration:* truth of grace hath, as much as any way, been declared thus. *Paul* after Conversion becomes a Preacher of that Name which he before blaspemed. Those of *Ephesus* that were
Act. 19. 19. given to witchcraft, and sorcery, after their Conversion, *brought their books together, and burned them before all men:* and many other instances of the like nature are urged by Divines to this purpose. *Cranmer* that had subscribed the *Popish* Articles with his right-hand, afterwards as a piece of revenge, put that hand first into the flames. A true Convert, of all sins, will be revenged most upon that, by which he hath most dishonoured God. His *right eye*, and his *right hand* shall smart for it; the one must be *plucked out*, and the other must be *cut off*, as we say of hunger, he will kill that, which otherwise would have killed him; I speak much of *mortification* and death to you this morning: Christians be not afraid: to dye thus, doth not argue imperfection: there is *corruptio perfectiva*,
Rom. 7. 9. a corruption that tends to perfection: *I was alive*, saith *Paul*, *without the Law once: but when the Commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* This is expiring unto life, just as an Embrio expires after it becomes a child.

Here I would add two *Cautions* under this head.

1. The *forbearing* of any outward act of sin whatsoever, is no evidence of *Mortification*, or *Conversion:* Sin may be restrained, when it is not mortified: a chained Lion is a Lion still; a Swine washed, is a Swine still. In some sense you may be said to be a *new man*, and yet you may not be a *new creature:* This may come to pass partly from the sense of temporal inconveniences, partly from the clamours of natural Conscience, or from fear of wrath. Such principles as these are not strong enough

enough to kill ſin, or to heal the ſoul, but are like thoſe odours which we uſe to raiſe men out of a fit of the Falling-ſickneſs, but doth not at all cure them of the diſeaſe.

2. The mortifying of our *darling* ſin is joyned with an univerſal hatred of *all* ſin: A true Convert *hates every falſe way*, as the *Pſalmiſt* phraſes it: ſin is often expreſſed in Scripture by *abomination*: it is ſo to God, it ſhould be ſo to man; anger is only with reference to *particulars*, but hatred is πρὸς τὸ γένη, againſt the kind; a godly man hates ſin as ſin, and therefore he hates every ſin; the Devil hates goodneſs, as goodneſs, and therefore he hates all goodneſs, *a quatenus, ad omne valet conſequentia*, a man may be angry with ſin, and not kill ſin: but as he that *hates his brother is a murtherer*, ſo *he that hates ſin is a mortifier*. When the *the right eye is plucked out, and the right hand is cut off*, the whole body of ſin hath its deaths wound. The man that keeps himſelf from *his* iniquity, will keep himſelf from every iniquity: *the heart with one hole reſerved for ſin is not ſound.*

Motive 4.

Mortification is a duty becoming the *beſt* of Saints, whileſt they are in this world. I told you in the beginning of this diſcourſe, that the Text was part of Chriſts Sermon upon the Mount; and if you conſult the firſt and ſecond verſes of this Chapter, you ſhall find that it was preached to Chriſts own Diſciples; *Vir bonus & pius, non eſt qui carnem non habet, ſed qui carnam ſuam mortificat:* a good man is not one that hath no fleſh, but he that hath *crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, Gal. 5. 24. Gal. 5. 24.

It is with our ſinful body, as if with our natural body: If you cut a Wen, or any Excreſcence of that nature, it will grow again, and again, and it will be an hard matter to be rid of it all your days: So though every day we be paring away our luſts, yet they grow again.

To cloſe all, *Go on, and perſevere* in the ſubduing and killing of thy *beloved* Luſt: Mortification is a work once done, and yet in this life it is always a doing: There are ſome things that conſiſt of an *iteration of multiplied acts*; as in Wedlock, perſons are actually married at once, the Husband ſurrenders himſelf unto the Wife, and the Wife ſurrenders herſelf unto her Husband, and yet if they live together, ſuitably to that near relation; marriage is as it were renewed every day: there is a continual ſurrender of themſelves each to other: So 'tis here, when the ſoul is firſt converted, the *beloved* ſin is mortified, and yet there is a continual mortification of it: this is a duty that conſiſts not in any one act, though never ſo good, never ſo vigorous: but 'tis a continued act of the whole life. 'Tis not killing ſin at one blow; the ſtrength of ſin decays by degrees, it begins in the weakening of ſin, and ends in the deſtroying of ſin, *Sin dyes a lingring death*, therefore let us go on in this great and neceſſary work. You know *Sampſon* deny'd, and deny'd *Dalilah* for ſome time, and would not diſcover where his ſtrength lay: but not holding out; he loſt his ſtrength and life to boot: beware of

Apoſtacy

Apoſtacy. *Crabs that go backward, are reckoned amongſt unclean creatures,* Lev. 11. 10. *Factum non dicitur, quod non perſeverat,* is a maxime, A Will not finiſhed, is no Will: a Deed, unleſs it be ſigned, ſealed, and delivered, is no Deed. The Sacrifice that was offered up unto God, was not to want ſo much as the tayl, *Lev.* 3. 6. True Chriſtians hate ſin ſo perfectly, that they cannot be quiet till it be utterly aboliſhed. Firſt, they go to God for Juſtification, *ne damnet:* then for Sanctification, *ne regnet*; then for Glorification, *ne ſit. Let us be faithful as to this ſpiritual death, that we may receive a crown of life.*

VVhat

What Relapſes are inconſiſtent with Grace.

Heb. VI. 4, 5, 6.

For it is impoſſible for thoſe who were once enlightned, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy-Ghoſt; And have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come: If they ſhall fall away, to renew them again to repentance, ſeeing they crucifie to themſelves the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open ſhame.

I Could ſay (Beloved) of the Interpretation and Application of this Scripture, before I began to open it (containing the Doom and ſad Sentence pronounced againſt *Apoſtates*, and *Relapſarians*) as once *Daniel* did to the King, before he opened his mouth to give the ſenſe of his *Ominous* Dream, *The Dream be to them that hate thee, and the Interpretation to thine enemies*; yet ſhall *I not* wiſh ſo much ill to *our worſt enemies*; but the Text be to them that *hate God*; and the Interpretation, only to the enemies and deſpiſers, or *deſpiters* of his *grace*. Dan. 4. 19.

It is one of the moſt ſtartling Scriptures in all the Bible, and one of the moſt Terrible *flying fiery Rouls* in all the Book of God, utterly conſuming the houſe of the hypocrite-apoſtate *with the Timber thereof, and the ſtones thereof*, and dreadfully affrighting his truly Religious neighbour who *trembleth* at Gods Word.

The *Novatians* or *Cathari* abuſed this place of old, to ſhut the *Church-doors* and gate of grace, upon ſuch as had fallen after their profeſſion of Chriſtianity. And many poor ſouls, and troubled conſciences, have as often

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quite perverted, or miſunderſtood it to the ſhutting up the *gate of heaven*, and door of hope againſt themſelves, after their bitter bewailed falls or ſlips: but both unjuſtly.

Gen. 40. But as *Joſephs* Interpretation once of the ſame nights dream, when rightly applied, did rid the *Butler* out of his miſapprehended fears, and only left the *more ſecure Baker* under that execution which the other apprehended, but himſelf never *dreamt* of; ſo neither this, nor any other Scripture ſpeaks a word of terror to any *ſin-troubled* ſoul, that trembles at Gods threats. But all the Prophets Propheſie good with one conſent to theſe, and my word ſhall be like one of theirs.

It was indeed once a joyful ſight which *Jacob* beheld at *Bethel*, Gen. 28. 12, *A Ladder whoſe foot ſtood on the earth, and the top reached to heaven, and angels aſcending and deſcending upon it.*

But here we ſee a *Ladder*, whoſe *top* ſpires *toward heaven*, but the foot reſteth in *Hell*, where (ſeeming) Angels of light aſcend, (or ſuch new ſtrange *Gods aſcend as the* Witch once ſaw *out of the earth*) but black Apoſtate Angels deſcend, *Intrat Angelus, Exit dæmon.*

I am to ſpeak of the Caſe of *Relapſes*, and my Text is the faireſt glaſs to diſcover ſo foul a ſight, that I know.

Here we have the riſe and fall, the firſt and the laſt, the better and
1 Sam. 28.13. worſe *part* of an *Apoſtate-hypocrite* deſcribed.

1. The former, his *Riſe*, his *firſt* and *Better* part ſet out in five Particulars. 1. *Enlightning.* 2. *Taſting the heavenly gift*, as of ſome common faith, or repentance, or the like. 3. *Partaking of the Holy Ghoſt*, (which is not to be underſtood of the *ſanctifying graces* of the Holy Ghoſt, but the *common*, or *extraordinary gifts*, as of Tongues, &c. of the ſanctifying Spirit). 4. *Taſting the good word of God.* 5. And *the powers of the life to come.* Had they had to theſe five ſteps, two other more, *ſincerity* at the bottom of the Ladder, and *perſeverance* at the top, they had been ſafe.

He ſaith not ἁμαρτάνοντας or παραβαίνοντας, but παραπεσόντας, *ut cum ædificium male ſartum prorſus corruit* Para. in loc.

2. The latter, his fall, his laſt and worſt part, is ſet out in four Things.

1. His *fall* is a *break-neck*, fatal *down fall. They fall away*]. It is not an ordinary ſlip, or ſtumble, but a down-right; not *fair* fall, but a *foyl* given them by Satan, ſuch a fall as his own was at firſt.

2. The *irrecoverableneſs* of that fall, they are *paſt grace*, and grace and mercy hath done with them: *They cannot be renewed to repentance*, as is ſaid of *Eſau*, there is no place for their repentance, though he ſought for the bleſſing with tears, *Heb.* 12. 17.

3. The *certainty* of that *irrecoverableneſs*, in that it is ſaid to be *impoſſible*, &c. he doth not ſay, it is *hard*, or *unlikely*, or ſeldom ſeen, but is abſolutely impoſſible ἀδύνατον ἦν, it was never ſeen, or ever ſhall be. *Impoſſible* not ſo much *ex natura rei*, as ſome things are utterly impoſſible, which imply a *contradiction*, as that *true* ſhould be *falſe*; *good*, *evil*; *light*, *darkneſs*; theſe impoſſible, becauſe *inconſiſtent* with the *nature of the things* themſelves. But impoſſible *ex inſtituto Dei*, becauſe inconſiſtent *with Gods decree* and declared will, as impoſſible as we ſay, An cleſt,

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or true believer ſhould periſh, or an impenitent perſon be ſaved; ſo we mean impoſſible by reaſon of Gods irreverſible decree concerning ſuch.

4. *The cauſe* that makes all this *dead-ſure*, and ſeals the ſtone of this certainty, *Seeing they crucifie to themſelves afreſh the Son of God, and put him to open ſhame*, and make no account of the blood of Chriſt, and the grace and promiſe of the Goſpel, and of the comfort of the Holy-Ghoſt, and are therefore ſaid to *ſin againſt the Holy-Ghoſt*, becauſe they directly ſlight, reſiſt, and oppoſe the gracious office and workings of the Holy-Spirit.

But I muſt ſtay no longer upon the words, by reaſon of that brevity expected in this Exerciſe.

Our obſervation: It is the moſt fearful and dangerous condition in the World, to begin in the Spirit, and end in the Fleſh; to riſe and fall in *Religion*; to decay and Apoſtatize from grace. To have had ſome work of the Spirit, and the Word, upon their hearts, ſo as to have light, and love, and taſte, and gifts, and ſavour, and ſeriouſneſs, and hopes, and fears, and after all to cool and give over: Oh how deſperate is ſuch a caſe! *Doctrine.*

To go to hell with ſo much of heaven, Oh what a hell is that! *Heb.* 10. 26, 27, *For if we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, &c. 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22, *For if after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again intangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning; for it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them*, &c.

Such a thing there *may be*; *poſſibly* the Text ſuppoſeth it that ſuch may fall, and *fall away* totally and finally, only pronounceth an *impoſſibility* of their riſing again.

Some are ſaid to fall from grace, *Gal.* 5. 4. the *ſtony* and *thorny* ground did ſo in a *Parable*. *Demas*, *Judas*, *Saul*, *Hymenæus* did ſo in good earneſt. A great Apoſtacy was foretold in the firſt days, to let in Antichriſt, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 3. And in the reign of Antichriſt more, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. all are warned, *Let him that ſtandeth, take heed leſt he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Heb. 12. 15, *Look diligently leſt any fail of, or fall from the grace of God.* Some of *Johns* hearers after a while left him, *Joh.* 5. 35. Many of our Saviours hearers quite left him, *Joh.* 6. 66. Many of *Pauls* ſuppoſed Converts were turned away, all they of *Aſia*, 2 Tim. 1. 15.

Some have left their Love, *Rev.* 2. 3. Some left the Faith, 1 *Tim.* 5. 12. Some have turned after the world, as *Demas*, 2 Tim. 4. 10. Some have turned aſide after Satan. And would to God there was no Example to be given in our age and obſervation, it is that which the Profeſſors of a true Religion are more ſubject to, than thoſe of a falſe, *Jer.* 21. 1. *Hath a nation changed their gods which yet are no gods! but my people hath changed their glory for that which doth not profit.* 1 Tim. 5. 15.

Now there are three falls to which men are ſubject.

1. Some fall as *Wood* or *Cork*, into the water, ſink at firſt, but get up again, being helped by the hand of divine grace, as *Peter*; or brought off by a miracle of mercy, as *Paul* and his company, after all hopes of ſafety were quite taken away.

Mat. 14. 31. Act. 27. 20. & 44.

This the fall of the godly.

2. Some fall as *lead* or *ſtone* into the bottom of hell, as *Pharaohs* hoſt into the bottom of the ſea, and never riſe again, having neither *promiſe* of God, nor *ſeed of God* to raiſe them up again, but make a final ſhipwrack of faith and conſcience, and of their ſouls together.

Exod. 15.

2 Tim. 1. 19.

This the fall of the wicked.

3. There is a *mixt fall* common to both, which is like the falling into an Epidemical Diſeaſe whereof many dye, and as many recover, of which in their order.

Four falls of the Godly.

There are four kinds or degrees of falling, which the people of God are ſubject to; And four *kinds* or degrees to which the wicked are ſubject; and each latter is worſe than other in them both.

1. The firſt and lighteſt fall of the godly, is that in their daily combat between fleſh and ſpirit, ſet out *Rom.* 7. at large, and *Gal.* 5. 17. *We cannot do what we would*, but fail or fall ſhort after our beſt endeavours. Our duties are imperfect, graces defective, our gold and ſilver droſſie, *our wine mixt with water*. Sin deceiveth, ſurpriſeth, captivateth, ſlayeth, yet reigneth not all this while. *It is not I, but ſin that dwells in me*. I conſent to the Law, *I delight in the Law of God, even in the inner man*, &c.

Theſe falls or ſlips are unavoidable and involuntary, there is no Saint but complains of them, no duty but is ſtained with them. In our cleareſt Sun-ſhine we ſee a world of ſuch Moats which yet hinder not the light and comfort of our Juſtification, and deſtroy not Sanctification. True grace conſiſts with theſe, yea, is not ſeparated from the aſſaults and indwelling of ſuch motions. *Will we, Nill we*, ſaid *Bernard*, *We are peſtered with ſwarms of theſe Egyptian flyes, and have theſe frogs in our inmoſt chambers.*

Velimus, nolimus, Irruit in nos Egyptiorum muſcæ, & Ranæ in Cubilibus Regis.

We are none of us *Supralapſarians* in this ſenſe, but *Sub-lapſarians* all, yea, and *Relapſarians* too. *The juſt falleth ſeven times a day, by this infirmity, and riſeth again*, and taketh no harm, but is kept humble and depending thereby. Every *ſon* and *daughter* of *Abraham* is kept bound *under this ſpirit of infirmity*, to their dying day.

Prov. 24. 16.

This firſt fall is but like the fall of a *miſt* in a winter morning, the Sun gets up, and it is a fair day after.

This is the firſt fall: the ſecond is worſe, which is

2. An actual and viſible ſtumble as to offence of others, yet occaſioned by ſome ſurreptitious ſurprize of temptation, for want of that due conſideration which we ſhall always have: this, *Gal.* 6. 1, the Apoſtle calls a mans being *overtaken with a fault*, who is *to be reſtored with a ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering we alſo may be tempted*; ſuch falls (or ſlips rather) all or moſt are ſubject to, πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες, Jam. 3. 2, *In many things we offend all.* We ſometimes trip, or ſlip, or *miſs our hold*, ſo the word ſignifies,

nifies, and ſo down we come, but not out of choice. Thus did *Peter* ſlip or *halt*, Gal. 2. 14, when he did *Judaize*, out of too much compliance with the *Jews*, whom therefore *Paul* did rebuke and *reſtore*. Thus the Diſciples ſlipt, when they in zeal to Chriſt would have fire fetcht down from heaven upon thoſe that would not receive them, whom Chriſt ſet right with a ſpirit of meekneſs. Luk. 9. 54, 55.

Theſe ſlips or falls are like thoſe of him whoſe foot is wrenched, or out of *joynt*, whence he halts till it be ſet right. Thus *Peter* is ſaid to halt; he did παρεκίνειν only, not ὀρθοποδεῖν: but when *Paul* had ſet his wrenched foot, he went upright ever after. Hence that word καταρτίζετε, *Gal.* 6. 1, [*reſtore*] is a Chirurgeons word, to ſet him right, as a bone out of joint. He that ſhall be cenſorious and ſevere againſt theſe two firſt kind of falls incident to moſt, let him, as *Conſtantine* ſaid to *Aceſius* the *Novatian* Biſhop, *get himſelf a ladder, and climb up to heaven by himſelf*, he ſhould have but a few come there elſe. Gal. 2. 14. Socr. l. 1. c. 7.

3. The third fall is much worſe, a fall from the *third loft*; whence, like *Eutychus*, they are taken up dead for the preſent, but they come to themſelves again. Theſe are falls into *groſſer* and more *ſcandalous* ſins, which do *Vaſtare conſcientiam*, ſet the ſtacks or Corn-fields of Conſcience on fire; whereas the other two forenamed (eſpecially the former) are ſuch as *Tertullian* calls *Quotidiana Incurſionis*, theſe are very dangerous, and befall not all Profeſſors (they had not need) but now and then one falls into ſome ſcandalous ſin, but they not uſually again into the ſame ſin after ſenſe and repentance of it. Thus fell *David* and *Peter* into foul flagitiouſneſs, but not *deliberately*, nor *totally*, nor *finally*, nor *reiteratedly*. Sin raged indeed, and ſeemed to reign for the preſent. *Moſes* hands grew weak, and the hand of *Amaleck* prevailed for the preſent: But a *ſeed of God* was in them, and they *could not ſin unto death*, but were renewed to repentance, and their ſins are blotted out. 1 Joh. 3. 9.

This fall is like the fall of the *Leaf* in *Autumn*; life remains ſafe: a Spring in due time follows, though many a cold blaſt firſt.

4. There is yet one worſe fall than the former, incident to a child of God too, to be of the decaying hand, and to remit and loſe his former fervour and livelineſs.

And it may be he never comes (as the ſecond Temple) up to the former pitch and glory. Thus *Solomon*'s zeal and love was abated in his old age, as his father *Davids natural* heat was in his age, that he needed an *Abiſhag* to lie in his boſom; ſo was *Solomons ſpiritual heat* cooled by the many *Abiſhags* that lay in his boſom: and though he was beloved of his God, his Sun ſet in a cloud, his laſt was not like his firſt. Thus *Sampſon*, after many triumphs over the *Philiſtims*, was at length circumvented and betrayed into their hands, who bound him, put out his eyes, made ſport with him, who though his hair and ſtrength grew again, and he died in the Quarrel, and died a Victor, yet never did he regain his ſight or liberty to his dying day. Theſe kind of decays are dangerous, and make the people of God go mourning to their dying day, and they are ſaved as by fire. But are not inconſiſtent with grace. Ezra 3. 12. 1 King. 11. 4, 9, 10.

Incepit melius quem deſinit, ultima primis cedunt, diſſimilis hic puer, ille ſenex.

This is like the fall of the *hair* in aged perſons; life yet remains, but ſtrength, *native* heat, and *radical* moiſtneſs decay, and the hair never grows alike thick again.

Theſe are the failings of the children of God, and there are four worſe than theſe follow, of the unregenerate, and each worſe than other.

The four falls of the unregenerate.

1. The firſt whereof is a *final* fall (but not a *total* at firſt) but *inſenſible* by degrees, *ſenſim ſine ſenſu*, grow worſe and worſe, as the *thorny* ground, choaked with cares, or drowned with the pleaſures of the world. This proves like *Elies* fall, they fall *backward*, break their *necks*, and die of it; and may with him be much lamented and pitied, but they are dead and loſt.

1 Sam. 4. 18.

2. Some fall *totally* and *finally*, but not *premeditately* and *voluntarily* at firſt, but are driven back by the Lion of Perſecution and Tribulation in the way, and they retreat. *Theſe endure for a ſeaſon*, as the ſtony ground; and leaving God, they are for ever left and forſaken of him, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9.

Mark 4. 17.

This is like the fall of *Siſera* at the feet of *Jael*, Judg. 5. 27. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, he fell and lay down dead.*

3. Some more fearfully, *Totally*, *finally*, *voluntarily*, *deliberately*, but not yet *maliciouſly*. Thus *Demas* is ſuppoſed to fall, who of a forward Diſciple or Teacher, is ſaid to have become after an Idol-Prieſt at *Theſſalonica*, (ſo *Dorotheus* reports of him). Thus fell *Saul*, who having rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord rejected him, and *the ſpirit of God departed from him, and an evil ſpirit from the Lord troubled him.*

1 Sam. 16. 14.

Of theſe three laſt, I may ſay as *Eliſha* to *Hazael* of *Benhadad*, 2 King. 8. 10, *Theſe may certainly recover: howbeit, ſaith he, the Lord hath ſhewed me that he ſhall ſurely die.* Theſe have not yet crucified the Son of God afreſh, nor done deſpight to the ſpirit of Grace, therefore it is not impoſſible they ſhould be renewed again to repentance.

Theſe are like *Sardis*, *Rev.* 3. 1, 2, 3, may have a name *to live, but are dead:* Their works not perfect before God, ready to die, yet are called once again to Repentance, otherwiſe certain deſtruction threatned.

But this is like the fall of *Haman*, whoſe doom was read by his Wife and beſt friends, *If once thou beginneſt to fall, thou ſhalt not recover, but ſhalt certainly fall irrecoverably.*

Eſth. 6. 13.

And theſe end fearfully uſually, and unpitied ſpectacles of Gods wrath; to aſtoniſh and warn others, as *Spira* once.

4. The fourth and laſt fall follows, which is like the opening of the fourth Seal, and the fourth horſe appears, *a pale horſe, and he that ſate on him is called Death, and Hell followed with him.* When men fall *Totally*, *finally*, *voluntarily*, and *maliciouſly*: Thus *Simon Magus*, *Julian* the Apoſtate, *Hymenaus* and *Alexander*, whoſe names are in Gods black book. Here the Gulf is *fixed*, and there is a *nulla retrorſum* hence. Theſe are not to be renewed by repentance.

Rev. 6. 8.

This fall is like that of *Jericho*'s walls, they fell down flat with a *curſe* annexed; or as *Babylon*'s walls, with a *Vengeance*, both without hope of repairing.

Joſh. 6. 20. Jer. 51. 58.

Or

Or like the fall of *Lucifer* the firſt Apoſtate, without offer, or hope of offer of grace any more for ever; or like the fall of *Judas*, who *falling headlong, burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his bowels guſhed out.* Act. 1. 18.

There is alſo another kind of fall, of a *mixt* or middle nature, and to which ſide of the two, *Godly* or *Reprobate*, I ſhould caſt it, is not ſo eaſie to determine; *A reiterated fall* into ſome foul act or courſe of ſin: and herein I muſt proceed as warily as the Prieſt of old in a doubtful caſe of *Leproſie*, whether to pronounce *Clean* or *Unclean*, and by his rule I ſhall go. He was to ſhut him up ſeven days, and look upon him better ere he could give his *Definitive* ſentence. If therefore, The mixt fall. Lev. 13.4,5,6, &c.

1. I ſee the ſore be but *skin deep*,] *Lev.* 13.4. & 34, and have not corrupted the blood:

2. *If it ſtand at a ſtay*, and *ſpread not* further] *v.* 5, 6. So alſo *v.* 23, 28, 34, 37.

3. *If all become white*] by repentance and mortification, I ſhall pronounce him *clean*. It *is a ſcab*, it is *but a ſcab*, *v.*6. or a *ſcall*, *v.*34. It is no deadly *Leproſie*.

But on the other ſide, 1. If it be *deeper than the skin*] (having taken the heart with the love and liking of it) *v.* 20. 25, 30.

2. *If it ſpread* further and further] by renewed acts, *ver.*8.27,36.

3. If *there be proud raw fleſh in the riſing*, v. 10, 14, 15, and the man preſumptuouſly live in it, and plead for it, I ſhall pronounce him *unclean*, it is an old Leproſie, *v.*11. It is *not the ſpot of Gods children*. Deut. 35. 5.

Concerning Relapſes, I ſhall deſire you to take notice of theſe eight obſervations.

1. It is very obſervable that the Holy Ghoſt is very ſparing in ſetting down in the Scriptures inſtances in this kind, well foreſeeing how apt *fleſh* and *blood* is to abuſe and pervert ſuch Examples to their own deſtruction: Such examples are as *Simeon* ſaid of Chriſt, *ſet for the fall and riſing again of many, and are a ſign ſpoken againſt.* How have *Davids* and *Peters* falls emboldned many to fall and live in ſin. There is *not one inſtance* in all Scripture of any Saint that laid violent hands upon himſelf, leſt any ſhould preſume to do the like. *But one* Example of late Repentance accepted, leſt many ſhould preſume; yet one leſt any ſhould deſpair. Thoſe falls are not ſet as *Land-marks* to guide you, but as *Sea-marks* to warn you. Luk. 2. 34.

2. It is certain *Paul* returned not to perſecute the Church after his Converſion, or *Manaſſes* to re-erect Idolatry, or *Matthew* to the Receit of Cuſtom after he was called thence.

3. Nor did *David* and *Peter* fall again into the ſame foul act of ſin after they had truly repented.

4. They were only wicked ones, as *Ahab*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Jeroboam*, who perſiſt and return to ſinful courſes, *from drunkenneſs to thirſt*, from thirſt to drunkenneſs. Of *Jeroboam* it is ſaid, *After this* (the Prophets warning, his arm ſmitten, his prayer thereupon, the recovery upon the Prophets prayer) *did he return again, and made of the loweſt of the people Prieſts of his high places, &c.* Neither warning, nor judgments, nor mercies could work any amendment in him. 1 King. 13.33.

5. It

1 Joh. 3. 9. 1 Joh. 5. 19. 5. It is certain that *he who is born of God, doth not commit ſin*, ſo as to make a trade of it, returning to his Vomit: But *he that is born of God, keepeth himſelf, and the wicked one toucheth him not.* He hath paid too dear for ſuch a miſcarriage, it was not ſo light a matter to lie under Gods wrath, loſe his former peace, nor was his comfort ſo ſoon reſtored, and Gods favour regained, that he ſhould hazard all anew, and buy Repentance at ſo dear a rate.

Deut. 29. 18, 19, 20. 6. Very dreadful is that threat of God: *If there be among you man or woman——or a root that beareth gall and wormwood: And it come to paſs, when he heareth the words of this curſe, that he bleſs himſelf in his heart, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, adding drunkenneſs to thirſt. The Lord will not ſpare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this Book ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord ſhall blot out his name from under heaven. And the Lord ſhall ſeparate (and ſingle him out) unto evil*, &c.

7 *Obſ.* Relapſes into ſin are like *Relapſes* into a *Diſeaſe* after hopes and beginning of recovery, if by taking cold, or want of heed taking, or other diſorder the diſeaſe return, and the man down again, this is worſe than the firſt ill fit, and long ere ſuch recover. But if as ſoon as he get a little ſtrength, he fall into a new Relapſe, we reckon his caſe very doubtful, if not deſperate.

8. Yet it is not to be denied, but there are ſome ſins of *humane infirmity*, which though repented of, a godly perſon may be again *overtaken* with and foyled, yet not his laſt end worſe than his beginning. Thus was

Mat. 20. 25. with Luk. 22. 25. *Jonah* overtaken with his paſſion a ſecond time, *Abraham* with his excuſatory lie, the Diſciples after a former rebuke, a ſecond time contending for ſuperiority.

The firſt fall in this kind I ſhould liken to a ſad and dangerous *fall*, by which one hath broken a *bone* in his leg or arm, which though it put him to much pain, is well ſet again, and he becomes as ſtrong as before, but more wary while he lives; *David* ſpeaks of his fall into ſin, that it was as a *breaking of*

Pſal. 51. *his bones.* But a ſecond fall, is like the breaking of the bone the ſecond time, which is more hardly ſet, and puts to more pain, and it may be the man feels it at times to his dying-day.

But a third or more frequent relapſe, is like the putting of an arm out of joint, again and again, not being well bound and looked to in time, becomes habitually looſe, and never keeps the place: ſo it is here, *Crebrous* and frequent acts of ſin beget an habit, and cuſtom in ſin, and then as ſoon *may*

Jer. 13. 23. *the Ethiopian change his skin, and the Leopard his ſpots, as one accuſtomed to do evil, ever learn to do well.*

Primò importabile, *proceſſu temporis* grave, *paulo poſt* leve, *poſtea placet & ſuave eſt, ad extremum, quod erat importabile ad faciendum, eſt impoſſibile, ad continendum,* Bern. de Conſ. *Ex voluntate perverſa factu eſt conſuetudo, & dum conſuetudini non reſiſtitur facta eſt neceſſitas.* Aug. Conf. l. 8. *Ad illud modicum, quotidiana modica addendo in tam conſuetudinem lapſa erat, ut prope jam plenos mero calículos inhianter hauriret.* Confeſ. lib. 9. *Bernard* deſcribes the ſteps of ſin, how it comes to its height. Firſt time it is *importable*, next time *heavy*, no more *importable*; then *eaſie*, then *light*, then *ſweet*, at laſt *neceſſary*; and what was at firſt *importable* to be committed, is now *impoſſible* to be omitted. And St. *Auſtin* confirms this by

a ſtory

a story of his own Mother, who by sipping of the Cup at first when she filled the Wine, learnt at last to take almost whole Cups, *Qui modica non spernit paulatim decidit*, is his good note upon it; He that makes a small matter of small sins, is in the ready way to fall into the greatest. Every new relapse into a former sin, is like the adding of a new *figure* to the first *Cypher*, which raiseth the sinners account *ten* or an *hundred* times more.

Therefore if thou hast been overtaken once, stop and be humbled, and say, *once I have spoken*, or done amiss, *but I will not answer* to plead for my self; *beware* the second time, the second fall; as the *second blow makes the fray:* but if a second time, say *you twice, but I will proceed no further:* but be sure thou take heed of drawing sin with *a threefold cord*, or *cart-rope:* this *threefold cord is not easily broken*, take heed of a third act; *fear, and the pit, and the snare are before thee*, O bold and presumptuous sinner: if thou escape the *fear* (of the *first* act) thou maist perish in the *pit* (for the *second*); but if thou escape the *pit*, thou wilt be taken in the *snare* (the *third* time): *upon the ungodly, God raineth snares*; God gives once to a reprobate mind, and they are gone. Think not after a third or fourth act of presumptuous sin, to go and *shake thy self* (by prayer and repentance) as *Sampson* once, and that thy strength may return to thee to be delivered from these *Philistines* which lie in wait for thee: he did so, *but wist not* (till he found it by woful experience) *that the Lord was departed from him*; so may it be with thee, therefore be warned.

Job 40. 4, 5. Isa. 5. 18. Eccl. 4. 12. Isa. 24. 17, 18. Psal. 11. 6. Judg. 16. 20.

1. This informs us, that possible it is for men (yea, too ordinary) to fall from grace: The Text supposeth it; and in another place, *Heb.* 12. 15. the Apostle *Items* us to *look diligently lest any fall from the grace of God*; the Angels did so at first, and *Adam* soon after, and that which was *Morbus Angelicus* then, is *Morbus Anglicus* now. The Lord may complain of us, as justly as ever he did of Israel, *My people are bent to back-sliding from me*, Hos. 11. 7. And *Isa.* 1. 5. *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more:* and *Jer.* 8. 5. *Why is this people slidden back by perpetual back-slidings? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return.* This is, and of late hath been the case and Epidemical Disease of *England.* It is no new thing to see the sons of fallen man to fall, and fall away. *Saul, Joash, Amaziah, Judas, Demas, Alexander*, fell away of old. Of all *Israel* that came out of *Egypt* with *Moses* and *Aaron*, only two, *Caleb* and *Joshuah followed God fully*, Numb. 14. 24. Of the four grounds in the Parable, only one held out. Many of *John Baptists* hearers left him, and fell away, *Joh.* 5. 35. Many of Christs hearers and disciples, *Joh.* 6. 65. Many of *Peters*, 2 Pet. 2. 20. Many of *Pauls*, 2 Tim. 1. 15. & 1 Tim. 5. 15. Many of *John* the Evangelists hearers, 1 *Joh.* 2. 19. *They went out from us, because they were not of us: for had they been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out that they might be made manifest, that they were not all of us.* But none of these were ever sincere Christians, and sound at the heart. *Use* 1.

We wonder not to see an house built on the sand to fall, or seed not having root wither, or trees in the parched Wilderness decay, *Jer.* 17. 5. or Meteors vanish, or Blazing-stars fall, or Clouds without rain blown about

bout, or Wells without Springs dried up. So for Hypocrites to prove Apoſtates no ſtrange thing, and utterly to fall away. There are four *wills* ſome have obſerved. 1. The *Divine* will never *alters* or *turns*. 2. The *Angels* will hath *turned*, never *returns*. 3. The will of *man* ſaln *turned*, and in converſion *returns*. 4. The will of *Apoſtates*, after that grace received and abuſed, *turns* away and never *returns*; but becomes like the fallen Angels.

2. Even godly and gracious perſons are ſubject to fall, and therefore muſt not be ſecure; they *muſt work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling*, Phil. 2. 12. They are bidden to *fear leſt they ſhould fall ſhort*, Heb. 4. 1. *Stand faſt*, 1 Cor. 16. 13. *Take heed leſt they* fall, 1 Cor. 10. 12. *Look diligently leſt any fail of* (or *fall from*, ſo is the other reading) *the grace of God*, Heb. 12. 15. *Take the whole armour of God, that they may be able to ſtand*, Eph. 6. 12.

Even the very Elect have this root of bitterneſs, and ſeeds of Apoſtacy within them. Even *Peter* had *ſunk*, if Chriſt had not put forth his hand to
Luk. 22. 31, ſave him from the water, *Mat.* 14. 31, and had been *winnowed as chaff*, if
32. Chriſt had not prayed for him that his *faith ſhould not fail*.

Let not him therefore *that puts on his harneſs boaſt, as he that puts it off*, 1 *King.* 20. 11.

3. Yet a truly regenerate ſoul, a plant of Gods planting by the water-ſide; a plant or graff grafted into Chriſt, and rooted in Chriſt, can never fall away totally or finally: *Peter* could not, when Chriſt prayed for him. The Elect cannot, *Mat.* 24. 24. In the general Apoſtacy of the Chriſtian world, and the greateſt Perſecutions under *Rome-pagan*, and *Rome-pſeudo Chriſtian* (Antichriſtian both times) when all the world *wandred after the Dragon and the Beaſt*: they who had their names written in the Lambs book, held out, and warped not, *Rev.* 13. 8. & 17. 8. The Elect are as Mount *Sion* that cannot be moved, and are as fixed ſtars that fall not. The houſe on the Rock ſtands firm in all weathers. *The tree by the waters ſide*, Jer. 17. 8. *Seed in good ground*, Mat. 13. *They who have a ſeed of God in them cannot ſo ſin*, 1 Joh. 3. 9. And *they that are born of God*, 1 Joh. 5. 18. They who are in the hand of Chriſt, *none can pluck them out*, Joh. 10. 28.

Yet as to the fallings of the Elect (not preſuming to tell you the *minimum* or *ſummum quod ſic*) we ſhall make theſe conceſſions, or obſervations.

1 *Poſition.* 1. We grant that the godly, as well as others, are ſubject to this *falling-ſickneſs*, having ſeeds of Apoſtacy in them; and would certainly fall irrecoverably, if left to themſelves. *By ſtrength* (his own) *no man ſhall prevail* or ſtand, 1 *Sam.* 29.

In te ſtas & non ſtas, Aug

2 *Poſit.* 2. Grace received truly ſanctifying, is not for its meaſure ſo great, or for its nature ſo immutable and invincible, but might be overborn and would, if not divinely ſupported and continually ſupplied; as the Widows oyl kept from decay, fed by a ſpring of *Auxiliary* grace; as *Joſephs bow abode in ſtrength by the arm of God, and his bough green and fruitful, fed by a well of living water*: ſo that it is not the grace *in us*, but the grace *with us*: grace ſupervening, and additional, which keeps us from falling

Gen. 49. 22, 23, 24.

Gratia gratiam poſtulat.

ἡ χαρις τῆ θεῆ σωὶ ἐμοὶ, 1 Cor. 15. 10.

ing. Even the good ground were it not for the influence of the Sun and Rain, would prove as the ſtony and thorny ground.

3. There is no ſuch ſtate of conſiſtency in the effectually called, but there is a daily combate, and oft-times a great inequality in his Pulſe; ſometimes *Amaleck*, ſometimes Iſrael *prevails*, and this war laſts not, as that between the houſe of *Saul* and *David*, for certain years: but as that between *Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days*. 3. *Poſit.* 2 Sam. 3. 1. 1 King. 14. 30.

Paul ſometimes as in the *third heaven*, crys out, *We are more than Conquerors: who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God*, &c? ſometimes as *under foot*, crys out, *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death.*

4. Even godly perſons may fall for once, very foully, as *Peter*; yea, lie long, as *David:* it is hard to ſay *how low* they may *fall*, and *how long* they may *lie*, yet ſin not unto death; as the Sun is for many months abſent from ſome Climates, yet returns again; ſo that they may then ſay with the Church, *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy: when I fall I ſhall ariſe, when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me.* 4. *Poſit.* Micah 7. 1:

5. There may alſo poſſibly be a relapſe, or falling anew into the ſame act of ſin through humane infirmity, as *Abraham* twice denying his Wife, the Diſciples twice contending for Supremacy. And as I will not ſay how oft thy brother treſpaſſing, and repenting, is to be forgiven, not to ſeven, but to *ſeventy times ſeven:* ſo I cannot ſay how oft through infirmity a ſinner treſpaſſing, and returning with repentance, may be forgiven: Gods mercies and thoughts being ſo far above mans. 5. *Poſit.*

6. The Chriſtian may, as to his own ſenſe, be reduced to a very ſad and low ſtate. 1. He is poor in ſpirit, he mourns, he hungers, thirſts, pants, doubts, diſlikes all. 2. He judgeth of himſelf as (under preſent prevalency of corruption) *Carnal, ſold under ſin*, a forced ſlave to it, *Rom.* 7. 14. 3. As if nothing had been done yet, and all was to do, he begs, O God, *create a new heart in me*, Pſal. 51. 4. He may be apt to conclude againſt himſelf, I never did yet truly believe or repent; and which is worſe, with *Thomas, I never ſhall believe.* 5 In this caſe he lies bound, as *Peter*, and cannot help himſelf till the Angel comes and ſtrikes off the bands, and opens the *iron gate.* 6. And, *as to comfort*, he may be at an utter loſs, *walk in darkneſs*, Iſa. 50. 10. judg *himſelf cut off*, Ezek. 37. 11. *his hope periſhed*, Lam. 3. 18. God hiding his face, Satan ſhewing his teeth, caſting forth a flood, and ſhooting in a peal of *fiery darts*, *Curſe God and die.* Thou art mine as ſure as death, as ſure of damnation, as I my ſelf. Then how doth a poor ſoul mourn! I am forſaken and quite caſt out of ſight, I am as a bottle in the ſmoak (of hell) like a broken veſſel, or fire-brand reſerved for hell: as poſſible for this *Venice glaſs*, ſaid that diſtreſſed Gentlewoman Mrs. *Honeywood*, not to be broken when it falls on the ground, as for me to eſcape the damnation of hell. God can do much, ſaith he, but doth *he ſhew wonders among the dead*, Pſal. 88. 10. Then *pray* he would, but *cannot*; *hope* he would, but *cannot*; *believe* he would, but *dare not*; *fear* he would not, but *muſt*; *reſolve* he would to caſt himſelf upon God, but he ſees his *reſolution* ſet another way, and he 6. *Poſit.* Joh. 20. 25. Act. 12. 6, 7.

cannot he thinks change it, therefore doth he not go about it. To God, he ſaith, *I am caſt out of thy ſight*, Pſal. 31. 22. To Satan, *Viciſti Satana, Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* to Deſpair, I yield, but call not for quarter, nor beg I mercy. To Affliction he ſaith, I am in the belly of hell, the weeds and chains of hell wrap me about. To Miniſters and other friends, he ſaith, *Stand away, go not about to comfort me*, Iſa. 22. 4. To promiſes and experience, he ſaith in his haſte, All are Lyars.

Jon. 2. 2. *Gratia nec totaliter intermittitur, nec finaliter amittitur. Actus omittitur, habitus non amittitur; actio pervertitur, fides non ſubvertitur; concutitur, non excutitur, defluat fructus, latet ſuccus; jus ad regnum amittunt demeritorie, non effective, Prid. Effectus juſtificationis ſuſpenditur, at ſtatus juſtificati non diſſolvitur.* Suff. Brit.

Yet may the tide turn, and the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe after a long winter, and continual night, as in thoſe remote Climates, who ſit in the region and ſhadow of death, and come *with healing under his wings*; and he may cry out, Rejoyce with me, *I have found him whom my ſoul loveth*; the loſt ſheep is found by the good ſhepherd, the loſt Saviour is found, *Luke* 2. the loſt Starr ſeen again, *Mat.* 2. And the utterly deſpairing hopes of ſalvation are diſappointed by a ſafe, though hazardous coming to land, *Act.* 27. 20. & 44.

For Gods Election ſtands firm, and his love is unchangeable, and his gifts without repentance; and the undertaking of Chriſt is to keep his to the end, that none ſhall pluck them out of his hand; and whom he gives himſelf for, he preſents them ſpotleſs and blameleſs before his Father.

Therefore are the Godly as firm and ſafe from utter falling away, as Mount *Sion* from being removed, or an houſe on a rock from being ſubverted.

Here follows an Uſe of Terrour, and ſpeaks to four Sorts.

2. *Uſe of Terrour.*

1. This Text is thunder and lightning againſt Apoſtates. Awake you drowſie Profeſſors. There is no ſin like Apoſtacy: Adulteries, Manſlaughter, Theft, Idolatries, *&c.* nothing to this; No *impoſſible* written over them, they have been renewed to repentance, 1 *Cor.* 6. 10, 11. *Mary Magdalens* ſeven unclean ſpirits; and *Manaſſes* ten or more, not ſo bad as the unclean ſpirit going out, and a return with an *Ogdeas malorum ſpirituum*, as *Irenæus* calls it, with ſeven other ſpirits more beſides it ſelf. Thou art in the high way to perdition, to the ſin againſt the Holy-Ghoſt. Sins and judgments meet together in this ſin. The Cataracts of upper and nether ſprings, all the *windows of heaven and fountains of the great deep*, (as in that great Deluge, *Gen.* 11.) are broken up to drown thee in perdition. Thy ſins making way for more judgments, and this judgment making way for more ſins: till between theſe two ſeas thy ſoul (as that veſſel, *Act.* 27. 41.) is eternally ſhipwrackt.

Hic videmus quanta ſit Apoſtaſiæ atrocitas nihil ad eam homicidia, adulteria, furta, &c. Par. in loc.

If thou art not altogether paſt feeling, crucifying the Son of God afreſh, and treading his Blood and Covenant under foot, I found this Trumpet to warn thee, or to deliver my own ſoul, *Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy firſt works*, Rev. 2. 5. *Be watchful and ſtrengthen what is ready to die*, Rev. 3. 2. *Haſte, eſcape for thy life, look not behind thee*, as was ſaid to *Lot*, or as *Jonathan* in another caſe, *Away, make ſpeed, haſte, ſtay not.*

1 Sam. 20. 38.

2. This ſpeaks terrour to Profeſſors fallen, or lying in ſcandalous ſins: you cannot ſin at ſo eaſie a rate as others, you know your *Maſters will and do it not, therefore ſhall be beaten with more ſtripes.* You are as a *City*

Luk. 12. 48.

ſet

ſet on an hill, your fault cannot be hid, no more than an Eclipſe of the Sun: when the Moon or other Stars totally Eclipſe, no notice is taken of them. You make *the enemies of Religion blaſpheme*, or deride godlineſs; you *make the Lords people to tranſgreſs*; your ſins are more infectious than others: your repentance had need be extraordinary, not only for pardon which you haply may obtain, but for the ſcandal which others may take, which you cannot poſſibly prevent. 2 Sam. 12. 14. 1 Sam. 2. 24.

3. Terrour to ſuch as after conviction and engagements under affliction and diſtreſs, after ſome prayers, vows, and a begun, or reſolved reformation, return to former courſes, as they after what they promiſed in their diſtreſs, *Jer.* 34. 15, 16, returned when delivered, and ſtarted aſide like a broken bow. The *new broom* of affliction ſwept the houſe clean for the preſent, but afterwards the unclean ſpirit returns, and this waſhed Sow is wallowing in the mire again.

4. Such as lapſe and relapſe into the ſame ſin again, as *Pharaoh*, *Jeroboam*, and thoſe Antichriſtian brood, *Rev.* 9. 20, 21. which repented not; notwithſtanding all judgments, convictions, confeſſions, promiſes, go from evil to worſe; from affliction to ſin, from ſin to duty, and from duty to ſin; repent and ſin, ſin and repent; and from repenting of ſin in diſtreſs, go to repent of their repentance when delivered. *Pharaoh unſaith* all he had ſaid, and ſaith his repentance *backward*; as the door turneth and returneth on the hinges, is ſometimes ſhut, by and by open again; ſo theſe in no conſtant poſture, their goodneſs like a morning-dew, a little devotion in a morning, for all companies till night comes, then a little evening-dew again; *Amphibia* that live in both Elements, *Modo Eccleſias, modo theatra replentes*, now you ſee them at a Sermon, anon at a Play-houſe; as *Solomons* Harlot ſacrificing in the morning, proſtituting her ſelf to all filthineſs at night, or as *Solomons* drunken beaſt, that hath had knocks and blows, yet being beſotted with his drink, or company, ſaith, *They have ſtricken me and beaten me, but I felt it not, when I awake I ſhall ſeek it again*; or as *Eſays* debauched watchmen, who having drunk ſufficiently one day, ſay they will do as much to morrow, and more too, and ſo had their drinking-matches and rantings from day to day. Jer. 9. 3. *Aug.* Prov. 7. 14, 15. Prov. 23. 25. Iſa. 56. 12.

The third Uſe is of Diſcrimination, to diſcover who is clean, and who unclean, in reſpect of falls and relapſes; and to put a difference between the *holy* and *prophane*, which is the proper work of a faithful Prophet: to ſome we are to *open* the door of hope, to ſome to *ſhut* it: every ſin is not a *ſin to death*; every diſeaſe not the *Plague*; every Ulcer not a *Leproſie*. 3. *Uſe* Ezek. 22. 26. 1 Joh. 5. 17.

1. There are ſome who have fallen into foul ſins, and they think their caſe deſperate, becauſe of the greatneſs of their ſins; but their ſin is not the ſin againſt the *Holy-Ghoſt*, becauſe not committed after *light*, *taſte*, *partaking of the Holy-Ghoſt*, &c. but in the days of their ignorance, as *Paul* once: ſome fall foully after Converſion, as *Peter*, but not deliberately, maliciouſly, and both theſe may be the *ſpots* of children, they ſee the *plague in their heart*, feel the ſmart, theſe have 1 King. 8. 38.

foul *ſcabs*, but they go to *Jordan* and waſh, go to the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs, and *then though their ſins be as ſcarlet, they*
Iſa. 1. 18. *ſhall be as white as ſnow, though red like crimſon, they ſhall be as white as wool.*

2. There be ſome Relapſes through humane infirmity, which are truly bewailed, this is not the ſin againſt the Holy-Ghoſt neither. Come into the Camp, I pronounce ſuch clean: For 1. there is no *raw fleſh* of
Lev. 13. 4, 5, 6, 14. pride and preſumption in them. 2. All is *turned white*, by true repentance: it is *a ſcab*, and but *a ſcab*. 3. It is but *ſkin-deep*, the heart was not tainted. 4. It ſtandeth at *a ſtay*. Theſe four ſigns ſhew it to be no Plague of Leproſie: ſuch are not to be ſhut up, or put out of the Camp. And God, as he pardoneth iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, ſo he promiſeth to heal and pardon *their back-ſlidings*, Hoſea 14. 4. Jer. 3. 22.

3. But there are others that make a trade of ſin, *drink up iniquity like*
Deut. 24. 19, 20. *water*, that add *Drunkenneſs to thirſt*, and fall and riſe, and riſe and fall: they lapſe and relapſe, and ſlide away as water, ſhall I ſay ſuch *ſhall have peace?* No, what peace to ſuch ſo long as their ſins remain? *the wrath of the Lord, and his jealouſie ſhall ſmoak againſt that man, and he ſhall blot out his name from under heaven.*

Call not this *a ſcab*, this is the Pleague of Leproſie, this is more than
Lev. 13, 10, 11, 14, 15. *ſkin-deep*, this doth not *ſtand at a ſtay*, here is proud *raw fleſh*, this is an *old ſore*, thou muſt out of the Camp, thou art unclean. *God will wound*
Pſal. 68. 21. *the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of him that goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes.*

I ſhall, to conclude, give a few ſhort Directions, to prevent Falls and Relapſes, but cannot now enlarge upon them.

Mat. 36. 41. 1. *Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation.* This is the old and great receit, and daily experimented with every ordinary Saint, *probatum eſt*; watch in prayer, watch after, watch when alone, watch when in company, eſpecially againſt ill Company, and all occaſions of ſin.

2. Keep Conſcience tender, and ſhun the firſt motions and occaſions of ſin; if thou find thy ſelf given to appetite, put a knife to thy throat, is the wiſe mans counſel; if to wine, look not on the glaſs; if to wantonneſs, come not near her corner: the conſecrated *Nazarite* muſt not only forbear the wine, but the grape; and not only the juyce, but the huſk and kernel of it.

Numb. 6. 4. 3. Take heed of having ſlight thoughts of ſin, as to ſay, As long as it is no worſe, it is the firſt time, it is but now and then, a great chance, when I meet with ſuch company: And many have ſuch fooliſh pleas, and ſo play at the mouth of the Cockatice Den till they are ſtung to death.

Deut. 25. 19. 4. Of having light thoughts of Gods mercy: *I ſhall have peace*, I ſhall have mercy when I do but ask; *At what time ſoever*, will ſave me: we cannot out-ſin the mercy of God; when ſin abounds, grace ſuper-abounds, *&c.* The Lord ſaith, he will not *ſpare ſuch, nor be merciful to them.*

5. Take

5. Take heed of reaſoning from Gods temporal forbearance, to eternal forgiveneſs. *Becauſe ſentence is not ſpeedily executed againſt an evil doer, his heart is fully ſet in him to do evil: but though a ſinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged,* &c. *yet it ſhall not be well with the wicked at laſt.* Eccleſ. 8. 11, 12.

6. Take heed of preſuming of thy own ſtrength: I can, and I mean to repent, I can when I will, and I will when time ſerves: I truſt I am not ſo bad, that God hath not given me over; many have gone further than I, why may not I repent at laſt hour? *Qui promittit pœnitenti veniam, non promittit peccanti pœnitentiam.*

7. Take heed of a mock-repentance, ſaying, I cry God-mercy, God forgive me, I ſin daily and repent daily, when I have ſworn or been drunk, I am heartily ſorry. Is not this repentance? I anſwer no, Repentance is quite another thing: the burnt child, we ſay, *dreads the fire.* Thou haſt ſmarted for ſuretiſhip, and haſt repented of it: thy friend comes again, and deſires thee to be bound with him once again: thou replieſt, I have paid dear for ſuretiſhip already, I have repented of my folly, I have reſolved to come into bonds again no more, no not for the beſt friend I have; thou art importuned by many arguments, but, peremptorily refuſeſt: urge me no more, I have vowed and reſolved againſt, and have made an oath, I would never be taken in that fault again. Now I believe thee, that thou haſt truly repented of ſuretiſhip, why doſt thou not thus, when thou art enticed unto ſin again? why doſt thou not ſay, I have ſmarted, confeſſed, bewailed, been heartily ſorry for my former folly: now ſpeak no more of it, *I have ſworn and will perform it, to keep Gods Commandments. Away from me ye wicked, I muſt keep the Commandments of my God.* This would be ſomewhat like true repentance. But take heed of a mock-repentance, leſt as true repentance meets with a true pardon, thy mock repentance ſhould be anſwered with a mock-pardon, as *Tertullian* excellently ſaith: There be ſome that ſay (ſaith he) their heart is good, they fear God, grieve for ſin, though yet they fall into ſin, they can, *ſalva fide & metu, peccare,* &c. *ſic & ipſi ſalva venia in gehennam detrudentur, dum ſalvo metu peccant.* They can live in ſin nevertheleſs, notwithſtanding their faith and repentance; and God can damn them nevertheleſs, notwithſtanding his mercies and promiſes, and pardoning grace. True repentance among other companions, is alway attended with theſe three, *what carefulneſs, what indignation, what fear hath it* wrought in you? Pſal. 119. 106. Pſal. 119. 115. *De Pœnitent.*

8. Conſider ſin reiterated, riſeth high, adds another figure to increaſe thy account: *Is the ſin of Peor too little for you* (old ſins in ignorance) *but that you muſt this day again turn away anew?* The Lord keeps an account how often, and how often, thou haſt committed ſuch and ſuch a ſin; at length ſaith, for *three tranſgreſſions, and for four I will not turn away their puniſhment.* When *Iſrael* had ſeen Gods works forty years, and tempted him ten times, he ſware they ſhould not enter into his reſt. In the Law, if an Oxe did gore a man, and the Maſter knew not of it, the Oxe ſhould die, not the Owner: but if the Oxe was *wont to puſh with his horn,* and the Maſter was told of it, Oxe and Maſter were both to die. Joſh. 22. 27, 28. Am. 1. and 2. chap. Numb. 14. 22. Exod. 21. 28, 29.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, though I will not ſay to thee, who art a frequent *Relapſarian*, it is *impoſſible*, as to the malicious relapſer; yet I ſay, Remember that every time the bone is broken, the more danger; and though thou mayeſt poſſibly after a ſecond breaking, have it well ſet, yet thou maiſt at times againſt weather, eſpecially when in years, feel it to thy dying day; thy
Joh. 13. 26. ſins *will lye down* with thee in thy grave; and in ſickneſs and trouble thou wilt poſſeſs the ſins of thy youth. I conclude all, as St. *Jude* concludes his Epiſtle, *Now to him that is able to keep you from* (all) *falling* (and relapſes) *and to preſent you faultleſs before his preſence with exceeding joy; to the only wiſe God our Saviour, be Glory and Majeſty, Dominion and power, now and for ever, Amen.*

How

How may we be ſo Spiritual, as to check Sin in the firſt riſings of it?

Gal. V. 16.

Walk in the Spirit, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.

THE Caſe of Conſcience to be diſcuſſed this Morning from theſe words, is——How a Chriſtian may be able to check ſin in the firſt riſings of it?

And without controverſie great is this myſtery of godlineſs, and if any other, of ineſtimable uſe and moment in the practiſe of Chriſtianity. As the title which *Solomon* inſcribes on the Frontiſpiece of that divine Poem of his, *the Canticles*, is, שיר השירים, the Song of Songs. And as *Ariſtotle* calls the Hand, the *Inſtrument of Inſtruments*; and the Mind, the *Form of Forms*: ſo may we with as juſt a reaſon ſtile this holy skill of arreſting, and intercepting ſin in its earlieſt motions and overtures, the *Art of Arts*. Could the Chymiſts ever compaſs their *grand Elixir*, it were but a poor and cheap trifle, in compariſon of this *grand Secret* of the School of Chriſt. So that the Caſe of Conſcience before us, (like *Diana of the Epheſians*) is great and illuſtrious amidſt its fellows.

My Text preſents us with it, reſolved in this excellent Rule of ſanctification, *Walk in the Spirit*, &c.

Wherein we have, 1. The principle and root of *ſin* and *evil*, the *fleſh* with its *luſts*. 2. The oppoſite principle and root of life and righteouſneſs, *the divine Spirit*. 3. The terms and bounds of a Chriſtians conqueſt, how far he may hope for victory——*Ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh*. 4. The method and way of conquering——*Walk in the Spirit*. Of each a word.

1. The principle and root of ſin and evil, the fleſh with its luſts. The Apoſtle meaneth (pardon the phraſe) a ſpiritual fleſh, not that of the body, but the mind. The immortal ſouls of men, through their Apoſtaſie from God, the bleſſed ſource and original of all goodneſs, are become carnal,

nal, *Rom.* 4. 7 There is a principle of *evil* radicated in the very nature, interwoven in the very frame, and births, and conſtitution of all men; a byaſs that turns us off in large and wide aberrations from the paths of life and happineſs, but with notorious partiality ſeduceth us into the ways of ſin and death. This the Scripture calls the *old man*, the *law of ſin in our members*, and the *body of death*, &c.

Ephes. 4. 22. Rom. 7. 23, 24.

The wiſer Heathen, felt by the very dictate of Reaſon, that humane nature was not either as it ſhould be, or as they could have wiſht it; what meaneth elſe that ἀπτεεία, πτερορύησις, that hanging, and flagging of the ſouls wings, that drooping of her nobleſt faculties, and that fatal unweildineſs, and untractableneſs of the will to vertue, which the *Platoniſts* ſo much complain of? and what meaneth that ἀνάγκη πολλὰ τῷ θεῷ δυσμαχοῦσα, καὶ ἐφωτιάζουσα, that reluctancy to the *divine life*, and that impetuous hurry, and propenſion wherewith they felt themſelves driven headlong towards folly, and ſenſuality?

Plut. in Ψυχογονία.

This *fleſh* in man, this corrupt and depraved nature, is perpetually flyblown with evil luſtings. This body of death, like a rotten carcaſe, is conſtantly breeding vermine, as a filthy quagmire, a noiſome *Mephitis* or *Camarina*, ſends out ſtench and unſavourineſs. This Region of the *leſſer World* (like *Africa* in the greater) ſwarms with Monſters, it is the *valley of the ſhadow of death, a habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls, where dwells the Cormorant and the Bittern, the Raven, the Scrich Owl, and the Satyr:* If I may allude to that of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 34. 11, 12, 13, 14. The Apoſtle ſets down elegantly the whole pedigree and lineage of evil, *Jam.* 1. 15. *Then when luſt hath conceived, it brings forth ſin, and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death.* Luſt is the root of bitterneſs, fruitful in all the unfruitful works of darkneſs; and theſe like the Apples of *Sodom*, and Cluſters of *Gomorrah*, if you gather them, crumble into duſt and aſhes of *death*, they are fruits nigh unto a curſe, and whoſe end is to be burnt. That is the firſt: The *old Adam*, the fleſh with its luſts.

Heb. 6. 8.

2. We have here the *ſecond Adam*, who is a quickning *Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. There is in good and holy ſouls an immortal ſeed, a principle of life and righteouſneſs, an antidote to the former poyſon: *for the law of the ſpirit of life which is in Jeſus Chriſt, hath made us free from the law of ſin and death*, Rom. 8. 2. *Philo* the *Jew*, or whoever was the Author of that noble Tract in the *Apocrypha*, called the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, ſtiles it,—— *The unſpotted Mirrour of the power of God, and a pure influence flowing from the glory of the Almighty.* Every one that is in Chriſt, is a new creature, born again, *and made partaker of the divine nature*; for it is the royalty of that King of Saints,—— *Behold I make all things new.* The Divine Spirit, that great and heavenly *Archeus* is buſie in holy ſouls; that mighty principle of life, is counter-working the fleſh and its luſts. So that now the *weapons* of a Chriſtians *warfare are mighty through God, for the pulling down of ſtrong holds, and the captivating every imagination, yea, bringing every thought into the obedience of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5, 17.

Wiſd. 7. 26. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Col. 3. 4, 5, 6. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Rev. 21. 5.

3. Here are the terms and bounds of the Spirits conqueſts in this preſent

ſent life, at which a Chriſtians hopes and endeavours muſt take aim, not the extirpating, but ſubduing, not the not having, but the not *fulfilling* the luſts of the fleſh; the fleſh will be luſting, that accurſed womb will be conceiving in the regenerate themſelves. But here is the Chriſtians priviledg, that while he walks in the Spirit, thoſe conceptions ſhall prove abortive.

4. The words entirely, and in ſum, preſent us with the method and way of conquering, with the art of circumventing ſin in the firſt avenues and approaches of it. *Walk in the ſpirit*, &c. this is the ἐν μέγα, the great and *Achillæan* Stratagem againſt the powers of darkneſs, the true and only courſe we are to take, if we would ſtrangle the brats of *night* and *hell* in their very birth, and cruſh the *Cockatrices* egg, whilſt it is hatching, and before it excludes the *Serpent*.

So that *in fine* the Obſervation which reſulteth, is this:

The beſt expedient in the world not to fulfil the luſts of the fleſh, is to walk in the Spirit, which what it imports, I come now to ſhew. Doctrine.

1. *Walk in the Spirit*, i.e. in obedience to Gods Commandments, which are the *Oracles of the Spirit*; that this is excellently preventive of fulfilling the motions to ſin, appeareth, *Pſal.* 119. 1, 2, 3, Bleſſed are the *undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord. Bleſſed are they that keep his Teſtimonies, they alſo do no iniquity.* Again a little lower, *ver.* 9. *Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* *Ariſtotle* that great Dictator in Philoſophy, deſpaired of atchieving ſo great an enterprize, as the rendering a *young man* capable of his ὑθικὰ ἀ μεθήματα, his grave and ſevere Lectures of Morality; for that age is leight and fooliſh, yet head-ſtrong and untractable. Now, take a *young man* all in the heat and boiling of his blood, in the higheſt fermentation of his youthful luſts, and at all theſe diſadvantages, let him enter that great School of the holy Spirit, the Divine Scripture, and permit himſelf to the conduct of thoſe bleſſed Oracles, and he ſhall effectually be convinced, by his own experience, of the incredible vertue, the vaſt and mighty power of Gods Word, in the ſucceſs it hath upon him, and in his daily progreſſions and advances in heavenly wiſdom. Let me invite you then this day, in the Prophets words, *Iſa.* 2. 5. *O houſe of Jacob come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.* And what that is, *David* tells us, *Pſal.* 119. 105, *Thy words are a light to my feet, and a lamp to my paths.* And *Hoſ.* 6. 5, *His judgments are as a light that goeth forth.* Order thy ſteps by his Word, and thou ſhalt not tread awry; let the Law of thy God be in thine heart, and ſin which is the tranſgreſſion of the Law, ſhall not come nigh thee: walk in this broad day-light of the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhining in the Scriptures, and thou ſhalt have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs. This was the practiſe and experience too of the man after Gods own heart, *I have hid thy word in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee*, Pſal. 119. 11. It is good writing after the Copy of ſo great a Maſter, go thou and do likewiſe.

Cereus in vitium flecti monitoribus aſper: Hor. ar. Poet.

2. *Walk in the Spirit*, *i.e.* as becometh thoſe in whom Gods Spirit dwells, as if the Apoſtle had ſaid, the part which ye are now to act, O

ye Chriſtian Galatians, it is that of *new creatures*; ſee that ye keep the *Decorum*. Demean your ſelves like the *children of God, who are led of the Spirit of God*, Rom. 8. 14. Be true to your part, fill it up, adorn it, and then ſure enough ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh, for that were to act the part juſt contrary to what you ſuſtain: as he that is to repreſent upon the ſtage ſome generous and heroick perſon, cannot do the leaſt baſe and ſordid thing, but he breaks his part, and digreſſeth into the garb and poſture of a vile and abject perſon: whilſt he is true to his part, he cannot poſſibly do any thing that is abſurd, and miſ-beſeeming.

μεταβάλλειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος.

Some of the *Nethinim* ſtood continually Porters at the door of the Temple, to keep out whatſoever was unclean; and hereunto the Apoſtle palpably alludeth, 1 *Cor.* 3. 16, 17, *Know ye not that ye are the Temples of God, and that the Spirit dwelleth in you? now if any man defile the Temple of God, him will God deſtroy: for the Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye are.* So then that which the Rule amounts to by this interpretation, is, *Walk in the ſpirit*, * i. e. *Walk as becomes the Temples of the Holy-Ghoſt, and ye ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.*

* That a good mans ſoul is a Temple which God inhabits, the Philoſophers acknowledg; and that the honour and worſhip rendred to him in a pure and holy mind, is incomparably more worthy and acceptable, than all the coſtlieſt ſacrifices and offerings in Temples made with hands, how magnificent ſoever. Μόνῳ γὰρ οἶδε τιμῶν ὁ περιηγέμενος ὁ ἐρῶν, ἑαυτὸν προσάγων καὶ ἄγαλμα θεῖον τεκταίνων τῷ ἑαυτῷ ψυχὴν καὶ ναὸν ὡς ὑποδοχὴν τῷ θείῳ φωτὸς, τὸν ἑαυτῷ παρασκάζων νῦν, ψυχῆς δὲ κὰ θαρρῆς τύπον οἰκειότερον ὀπτῆς. Θεὸς γὰρ ἔχει δὲ καὶ ὁ πύθιος συμφέρεται λέγων· Εὐσεβέστερον δὲ βέλτιον, γάνυμαι τύσον ὅσον ὀλύμπῳ. Hierocl. in Pythag. aur. carm. p. 28.

8. *Walk in the ſpirit*, i. e. Fulfil the counſels and advices of the Spirit, and you ſhall not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh. Every renewed ſoul is the Scene and Stage wherein the two mightieſt Contraries in the World, the Spirit and the Fleſh, *i. e.* Light and Darkneſs, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, Good and Evil, *Michael* and his Angels, and the Dragon with his, are perpetually combating hand to hand. And well it is for a Chriſtian that the Holy-Spirit is luſting in him againſt the fleſh, ἀγαθὴ δ' ἔρις ἥδε βροτοῖσι; God takes thy part, Chriſtian, the Spirit of the Lord of Hoſts is with thee, if thou doſt not ſin and grieve him away. Follow but thy Leader, be prompt and ready to ſtart at the Divine ſignal, when the Holy-Ghoſt diſplays his Enſigns, then μετ' ἰχνία βαῖνε θείοιο, March preſently forth under thoſe mighty and victorious banners, and thou ſhalt become *Invincible*. * When a Chriſtian goeth out thus to warfare, following the Almighty conduct of his God, he muſt needs proceed conquering, and to conquer. *My ſoul followeth hard after thee* (ſaith *David*) *thy right hand upholds me*, Pſal. 63. 8. The Original is, דבקה אחריך נפשי, *My ſoul cleaves after thee*: As if he had ſaid, Go, lead on, my God, behold I follow as near, as cloſe as I can, *e veſtigio*, I would not leave any diſtance, but purſue thy footſteps, ſtep by ſtep, leaning upon thine everlaſting arms that are underneath me, and following thy manuduction. *Lot* had almoſt periſht in *Sodom*, for lingring when his God haſtned him away,

* ἁπλῶς μηδὲν ἄλλο θέλειν ἢ ἅ ὁ θεὸς θέλει, καὶ τὶς σε καλύσει, τίς ἀναγκάσει ἢ μᾶλλον ἢ τὸν Δία ὁτὰν τοῦτον ἔχῃς ἡγεμόνα ᾧ τοιούτῳ συνθέλῃς καὶ συνορέγῃς, &c. Arrian in Epictet. l. 2. c. 17.

away, *Gen.* 19. 16. But *Sampſon* (till then invincible) awoke too late from the boſome of his *Dalilah*, when the *Philiſtines* had ſhaven his ſeven locks: *And he thought to go out and ſhake off their cords wherewith they bound him, as at other times; but the Lord was departed from him, and they took him and put out both his eys*, Judg. 16. 20, 21. A Chriſtian is more than a man when he acts in concurrence with his God, *Pſal.* 27. 1, *The Lord is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?* But if he reſiſts the Holy-Ghoſt, he doth not only grieve him, but will if he go on reſiſting, quench him, and then he is all alone, and becomes heir to the curſe of *Reuben*, Gen. 49. 3, 4. he who was a while ſince, *the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power, is now weak as water, and cannot excell.*

The Proverb tells us, πολλὸς ἐν καιρῷ χρόνος. There is a great deal of Time in a little opportunity. It is good ſtriking while the Iron is hot, and lanching out while wind and tyde ſerve. Open all the Sails to every breath and gale of Gods good Spirit. Welcome every ſuggeſtion, reverence every dictate, cheriſh every illapſe of this bleſſed *Moniter*, let every inſpiration find thee, as the Seal doth the Wax, or the ſpark the tinder, and then (as the Spouſe tells her beloved) or ever thou art aware thy Soul will make thee as the Chariot of* *Aminidab*. Step into the pool when the Angel ſtirs the water, *Joh.* 5. 4. Keep touch with the motions of the Spirit, and all is well.

* עמי נידב *i. e.* a free, and willing people.

But if theſe three Rules are too general, and remote, I ſhall now lay down ſome more particular and exact directions for checking *the beginnings of ſin*, and theſe are of two ſorts (as Phyſicians have their *Prophylactiques*, and their *Therapeutiques*), Some for the prevention of the fit and paroxyſm; others for the cure, and removal, when the ſymptoms of it are upon thee.

1. Before the Paroxyſm cometh, prepare and antidote thy Soul againſt theſe luſts of the fleſh, by obſerving theſe advices.

The firſt is that notable counſel of *Eliphaz* to *Job*, cap. 21. v. 21. *Acquaint thy ſelf now with God, and be at peace.* Get thy heart fixed where thy treaſure is; have *thy converſation in heaven, and thy fellowſhip with the father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt:* Flee to thy God to hide thee. *He that dwelleth in the ſecret place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty. Surely he ſhall deliver thee from the ſnare of the fowler. He ſhall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt, his truth, ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler*, Pſal. 91. 1, 3, 4. Ariſe with thine ariſen Lord, *and ſeek the things that are above:* Set thine affections there, *where Chriſt ſits at the right hand of God.* If the Soul is not where it animates, but where it loves, awaken thine, and kindle it into holy paſſionate Extaſies of love, that thou mayeſt live in heaven all day long, and (which is the priviledg of the *upright*, Pſal. 140. 13.) dwell in the preſence of that God whom thy ſoul delighteth in. The Tempter cannot reach thee there. 1. *Rule.*

Be much in converſe with God, and the Devil will have little con-

verſe with thee; or if he have, it will be to little purpoſe. How was the Majeſty of King *Ahaſuerus* incenſed at that affront of *Haman*, when he threw himſelf upon Queen *Eſthers* bed,—*What will he force the Queen in our preſence?* Eſth. 7. 8. Keep but in the preſence of thy Lord, thy King, thy Husband, and the *Raviſher* will not offer to force thee there; or if he do, it will be but in vain. How ſecure is that Soul that lives under the deep, and warm, and conſtant ſenſe of Gods being its *all in all*? What a munition of Rocks is this againſt all aſſaults and incurſions of the Tempter? They are our tame and common Poultry, whoſe wings ſweep the ground as they flye, and raiſe a duſt: but the generous Eagle ſoon mounts above this ſmoaky lower Region of the Air, till ſhe makes the Clouds a pillow for her head. Put on, Chriſtian, thy Eagles wings (which are the ſame with thoſe Doves wings which *David* prays for, *Pſal.* 55. 6.) and *flee away, that thou mayſt be at reſt. They that wait on the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, &c. Iſa.* 40. 31. When the ſoul is once but upon the wing heavenward, O how eaſily then doth it ſoar away above this Region of ſmoak and duſt, above this *Atmoſphære* of carnality and fleſhly luſtings, into the pure and free *Æthereal* air, the bleſſed ſerenity and reſt of *Gods life and kingdom, which is righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, Rom.* 14. 17. It is cold iron that ſhews its ruſty ſcales, they diſappear when it is red hot. Get but thine heart on fire heaven-ward, be but aſcending thither *Eliah*-like, in a flaming Chariot of holy longings and pantings after God, and the luſtings of the fleſh ſhall no more appear to deform thy beauty, then the ruſt of Iron appears when the metal is *Candent*, i. e. all over of a light and glowing ardour. The Rule then is, Be ſick of love to thy dear Maſter and Lord, and thou ſhalt not be ſick of ſin. Stir up ſpiritual and holy luſtings in thy ſoul after the *love* and *favour*, the *grace* and *image* of thy God, and thou *ſhalt not fulfill the luſtings of the fleſh.*

2. *Rule.* Study throughly *the unchangeable natures, the eternal laws and differences* of moral *good* and *evil*. To open this, there are ſome things of a *middle* and *indifferent* nature, neither good nor evil in themſelves: But if God commands or forbids any of theſe, they are then good or evil indeed, but only *becauſe* or *whilſt* he doth ſo. The Ceremonial Law of the *Old Teſtament* ſtood in theſe things, and is now aboliſhed by the ſame Divine Authority which enacted it. And it is now the glory of Chriſtian Religion, that (excepting the two Sacraments, and a very few other repoſitive inſtitutions for great and weighty cauſes reſerved) the Evangelical Law of the *New Teſtament* conſiſts of ſuch precepts as carry their own *Credential Letters*, and are built upon moral grounds of everlaſting equity and righteouſneſs. Wherefore the *Romaniſts* deſerve very ill of Chriſtian Religion; nor are the *Lutheran* Churches to be excuſed, who of their own heads impoſe ſo many indifferent things now in the ſervice of God under the Goſpel, and that for no other reaſon, but becauſe they will; conſequently rendring that yoke a *hard one*, which Chriſt left *eaſie*, and that burthen a *heavy* one, which he would have *light*.

But now moral Good and Evil are not only ſuch becauſe God commands

mands the one, and forbids the other, but becauſe the things themſelves are ſo, eſſentially and unalterably. As *Mathematical* truths and Proportions are not ſuch becauſe God would have them ſo, but becauſe the nature of the things cannot be otherwiſe. Almighty power it ſelf (reverently be it ſpoken) cannot make two *parallel lines* or *ſurfaces* meet, though extended infinitely; or the three *Angles* of any *ſtraight-lined Triangle*, amount to any leſs or more than *two right Angles* in *Geometry*; or in *Arithmetick*, alter the proportions between *two* and *four*, to any other than that of *double* and half; or between *three* and *nine*, than that of a root and ſquare; or (to name no more) is it poſſible that a *Seventh* in *Muſick* ſhould ever become a *Concord*, or a *Uniſon*, fifth, or eighth, a *Diſcord*: for theſe things are in their very nature fixed, and unchangeable, they muſt be what they are, or not be at all. Thus there is an eternal reaſon, why that which is *good* ſhould be ſo, and commanded; and why that which is evil ſhould be ſo, and forbidden, which depends not ſo much on Gods *will*, as on his *nature*. For if God could will, that *good* ſhould be *evil*, and *evil good*, he could deny himſelf, and change his own unchangeable *Divinity*, which is impoſſible: And therefore I look upon that opinion of a modern * *Dutch* Author (though I would be ſo charitable, as to believe he knew not, and therefore meant not what he ſaid) as overthrowing all Religion, The thing is this, That God may if he pleaſe, out of the vaſt Soveraignty of his Will, command all that wickedneſs which he hath forbidden, and make it our duty; alſo forbid all that holineſs which he hath commanded, and make it become ſin to us.

* *Ziglovius.*

For my part, I would chuſe rather to be an Atheiſt, than to believe there is ſuch a *God* as *this* in the world. But I am ſure the *holy One of Iſrael* cannot do ſo, not through any defect, but through infinite plenitude, and redundance of all perfection. *Ex. Gr.* There is an eternal fitneſs and comelineſs that a reaſonable creature ſhould love, and honour, and obey its Creator, and contrarily an eternal horridneſs, and indecency, that an immortal ſoul ſhould forget, contemn, and affront the Father of ſpirits. Now to affirm that God can diſpenſe with the former, nay, make our fear of him, or delight in him to be a ſin, and puniſh it with everlaſting tormens; and to affirm that God can wink at, or allow the latter, much leſs command Atheiſm, Blaſphemy, Pride, Unthankfulneſs, *&c.* or make Hypocriſie, Covetouſneſs, Revenge, Senſuality, to become duties and graces, and reward them with everlaſting happineſs, this were to utter the moſt helliſh blaſphemy, and the moſt impoſſible contradictions in the world. The heathen *Plato* (in thoſe divine diſcourſes of his, his *Eutyphro*, and *Theætetus*, and otherwhere) may well rebuke the madneſs of ſuch Chriſtians, as this bold and vain ſpeculator. The ſum of this Rule then is; Deeply poſſeſs and dye thy ſoul all over with the repreſentation of that everlaſting beauty and amiableneſs that is in holineſs, and of that horror and uglineſs, and deformity that eternally dwells on the forehead of all iniquity. Be under the awe and majeſty of ſuch clear convictions all day long, and *thou ſhalt not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.*

For

For the mind of man is wont to conceive before its own apprehensions and Idea's of good and evil, as *Jacobs* sheep did before the Rods in the Gutter. If thy notions of good and evil be right and clear, thy lustings and desires will be from evil towards good; all the conceptions of thy soul, and their births, will be fair and unspotted. But if thy apprehensions be speckled, confused, and ring-straked (like his Rods) the conceptions of the mind, thy lustings, will be so too, so great a truth is that πᾶς μοχθηρὸς ἀγνοεῖ, that dark ignorance and folly lies at the bottom, as the root and foundation all wickedness, * every immortal man is a fool, even when he commits a known sin, yet then he may be said not to know what he doth, *Luk.* 23. 34. All the Reason in the world takes the part of holiness, and sin hath not one jot of true Reason to plead, or alledg in its own behalf.

* Παραδηγμάτων ἐν τῷ ὄντι ἐσωτων, μᾶλλον θεὸς, εὐδαιμονέστατος, τῷ δὲ ἀθέῳ ἀθλιότατος ὑποθλιότητος ἡ ἐσχάτης ἀνοίας λαμβάνουσι. τῶν μὲν ὁμοιόμενοι διὰ τας ἀδίκους πράξεις, τὸ δ' ἀνομοιόμενοι ἐκ ὁρῶντες ὅτι ὅταις ἔχει, ζῶντες δὲ τὸν εἰκότα βίον ὦ ὁμοιῶνται, δίκην τίνουσι, &c. Plato in Theæteto.

Rule 3. Understand thy self, be no stranger to thy own breast, know the frame and temper, and constitution of thy mind. *The wise mans eyes are in his head, but the fool walketh in darkness*, Eccles. 2. 14. It is a true and sober maxim of the *Platonist*, ἐφ' ὅσον σαυτὸν ἀγνοεῖς, νόμιζε μαίνεσθαι, as far as a man is ignorant of himself, so far forth he is to reckon himself guilty of madness and distraction. The Satyrist complains of this——*Ut nemo in se tentat descendere, nemo.* Dare to unlock thy bosom, to ransack every corner of thy heart, let thy Spirit accomplish a diligent search. Feel the pulse of thy soul, visit it often, ask it how it doth. Surveigh thy self, and blush to leave any *terra incognita*, any region of thy mind undiscovered. God hath charged and entrusted every man with his own soul, and what folly is it ἀλλοτριεπισκοπεῖν, to be busie in what doth not concern thee, and neglect what chiefly doth so, the affairs of thy own mind? Is any thing nearer thee, or of such consequence to thee as thy self? O let thy charity then begin at home. Thou owest this duty to thy self, to take an exact account daily of the posture and order of thy inward man. With how great confusion doth the Spouse acknowledg this neglect, *Cant.* 1. 6. *They made me the keeper of the Vineyards, but my own Vineyard have I not kept.* If ever thou wouldst be dextrous in suppressing the first risings of sin, enquire, what advantages the Tempter hath against thee? where that *nescio quid tenerum & molle*, lieth in thy soul (as Cicero calls it) against which temptation plants its chiefest battery, and artillery? what thine own iniquity is, *Psal.* 18. 23. which is that εὐπερίστατος ἁμαρτία, *the sin that doth so easily beset thee*, Heb. 12. 1. See what grace is principally wanting in thee, which is weakest; in what instances thy greatest *faileur* betrays it self, in which of thy passions and affections thou art most *peccable*, and what lustings of the flesh they are, which give thee the frequentest *Alarms*, and threaten the greatest dangers? be making these re-searches and explorations daily; compare thy heart with the Law

Demophil. in γνωμ.

Juvenal.

of

of the *eternal God*, and with the dictates and maxims of thine own conſcience. See, where thy greateſt diſcrepancy, and non-conformity to theſe from time to time ariſeth, and this (like *Pathology* or underſtanding the diſeaſe, and the conſtitution of the Patient) will hugely miniſter and conduce to the exact method of Phyſick, either for prevention, or for cure.

Get and keep a tender Conſcience. Be ſenſible of the leaſt ſin. As the apple of the eye (the fitteſt Emblem, in the world, of a tender Conſcience) is not only offended with a blow or wound, but if ſo much as a little duſt or ſmoak get in, it weeps them out. Some mens Conſciences are like the ſtomack of the Oſtrich, that digeſteth iron, they can ſwallow and concoct the moſt notorious ſins, ſwearing, drunkenneſs, *&c.* without regret, *their conſciences are ſeared as with an hot iron*, as the Apoſtle phraſeth it, 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. They have ſo inured their ſouls to the groſſeſt wickedneſs, as the *Pſylli*, a people of *Africa*, whom *Plutarch* mentions, had their bodies to the eating poyſon, that it becomes as it were natural. But a good Conſcience hath a delicate ſenſe, it is the moſt tender thing in the whole world, it feels the leaſt touch of known ſin, and grieves at the grieving of Gods good Spirit, not only for *quenching*, or *reſiſting*, or *rebelling againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, but even for *grieving* the holy Spirit of promiſe, whereby it is ſealed to the day of redemption, *Epheſ.* 4.30. The moſt tender hearted-Chriſtian, he is the ſtouteſt and moſt valiant Chriſtian. *Happy is the man that feareth always, but he that hardneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief*, Prov. 28. 14. It is the trueſt magnanimity and heroick courage in our ſpiritual warfare, to tremble at the leaſt iniquity. A Chriſtian is never fitter to *endure hardneſs as a faithful ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt*, than when his Conſcience is moſt tender. To be ſuch a coward as not to dare to break any one of Gods Commandments, is to be the valianteſt perſon in the world, for ſuch a one will chuſe the greateſt evil of ſuffering, before the leaſt of ſinning; and however the *jeering Iſhmaels* of the world be ready to reproach, and laugh one to ſcorn for this niceneſs, and preciſe ſcrupuloſity (as they term it) yet the *choice* (if God be but wiſer than vain man) is a very wiſe one. *Rule* 4. 2 Tim. 2. 3.

Keep an exact guard upon thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23; let the eyes of thy ſoul be open and awake, upon all the ſtirrings of thy thoughts and affections. Bid them ſtand at their firſt appearance. As ſoon as ever thou deſcrieſt any of them in motion, ſummon them before thy ſouls tribunal: let them not paſs till thou knoweſt perfectly whence they come, whither they go. Ask their errand: *Rule* 5.

State viri; quæ cauſa via? quive eſtis in armis? Virg.

Is it grief, or is it joy, or hope, or fear, or love, *&c.* that is now upon the march? Demand the *Word* of it, ask whether it hath a *Paſs* from God and Conſcience; Catechiſe it, examine it, ſearch it; ſpeak to it in the Centinel's and Watchman's phraſe, δειξον τα συνθήματα, ſhew me your Ticket, Tell me my *deſire*, my *love*, my *fear*, my *anger*, by whoſe authority

rity art thou now up, and in motion? if they are able to produce a good warrant, from Gods Commandments, or from the dictate of reaſon, and conſcience, let them go on in Gods name; they are about their buſineſs. But if they cannot, arreſt them as idle vagrants, nay as enemies to thy ſouls peace, and charge them upon their allegiance to their ſuperiours, that they ſtir no further.

Rule 6. Be daily training and exerciſing all thy Graces. Have them always in battel-array, be in a military poſture, both defenſive and offenſive. Stand conſtantly to thine arms, for thou haſt to do with two enemies that will never give thee any *truce*, or reſpite, the יצר רע and the מלאך חטורת (as the *Jews* call them) the fleſh within thee, *Jer.* 17.9, and the *Tempter*, that deſtroying Angel of the bottomleſs pit, without thee, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. the Chriſtian warfare is πόλεμος ἄσπονδος, a war never to be altered, it admits of no peace, no ceſſation. The Soldier of Chriſt muſt never lay down his arms, but expect to be upon continual duty, and travel, till the great Lord of Hoſts, under whoſe banner he now fighteth, is pleaſed to remove his Quarters from that Army Militant here on Earth, to that Bleſſed and Triumphant in the Heavens.

Rule 7. Be well skilled in the *Elenchs* of *Temptation*. I mean, in unmasking the Sophiſtry and Myſtery of iniquity, in defeating the *Wiles* and Stratagems of the Tempter, and in detecting, and fruſtrating the cheats and fineneſſes of the fleſh with its deceitful luſts, *Epheſ.* 4. 22. 2 *Cor.* 2. 11. No ſmall part of ſpiritual wiſdom lies in the bleſſed art of diſcovering and refuting ſins fallacies and impoſtures. If ever thou wouldſt prove famous, and victorious, and worthy honour and reverence in thy ſpiritual warfare, be well ſeen in the skill of fencing, know all thy wards for every attaque. Provide thy ſelf with anſwers and retorts beforehand, againſt the ſubtil inſinuations and deluſions of thine enemy, *Ex. gr.* If Satan tells thee (as he often will) that the ſin is pleaſant, * ask whether the gripings of conſcience be ſo too, whether it be ſuch a pleaſant thing to be in hell, to be under the wrath of an Almighty Judg. If he tells thee, no body ſees, thou maiſt commit it ſafely; ask whether he can put out Gods all-ſeeing eye, whether he can find a place empty of the divine preſence for thee to ſin in, or whether he can blot out the *Items* out of the Book of Gods remembrance. If he tells thee it is a little one; ask whether the Majeſty of the great *Jehovah*, be a little one, whether there be a little hell, or no. If he talks of profits and earthly advantages that will accrue, ask what account it will turn to at the laſt day, and what profit there is, if one ſhould gain the whole world and loſe his own ſoul; or what one ſhould give in exchange for his ſoul. When ſin, like *Jael*, invites thee into her Tent, with the *lure* and *decoy* of a Lordly treatment, think of the nail and hammer which faſtned *Siſera* dead to the ground. Be not caught with chaff, lay by thee ſuch *memoires*, ſuch anſwers and *reparties* as theſe, wherewith thou maiſt reply upon the Tempter: that the God of truth hath other manner of *pleaſures*, *profits*, *honours*, to court thy love, and reward thy ſervice with, than the father of lies, *viz.* true and real, ſolid and eternal ones; what are the pleaſures that are in ſin for a ſeaſon,

* Τὶς σε πολυπλανέων ἐπεων ἐδίδαξε κελεύθους, Muſæ.

Mat. 16. 26.

Judg. 4. 18, 21. & 5. 25, 26.

ſeaſon, to be compared with the rivers of Gods pleaſure, that are for evermore at his right hand? And what is a little wealth, that thieves can ſteal a deſpicable heap of riches, which like a flock of birds alighting a little while in thy yard, will take wing preſently and fly away, to be named with the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, or that inheritance of the Saints in light? Or what is the painted bubble, the fading, though beauteous Rainbow, of earthly honour and grandeur, to a weight of glory, to an incorruptible Crown of Righteouſneſs, that fadeth not away; to a Kingdom, which it is the Fathers good pleaſure to reſerve in the higheſt heavens for every ſheep and every lamb of his little flock; and (to name theſe Conſiderations by cluſter) remember, that the greateſt wiſdom is to do, not what in ſome poor few regards is, but what is abſolutely lovely and deſirable; that what is beſt of all, is beſt for thee to love, and mind, and proſecute; that a good Conſcience is a continual feaſt; that God alone is enough, and without him, nothing for thy happineſs: that thy ſoul is worthier thy care, than thy carcaſe; and the life to come, than this; that eternity is more valuable than time; that not the opinions of men lulled aſleep in voluptuouſneſs and ſenſuality, but Gods eſtimate, but the ſentiments of the holieſt, beſt, and wiſeſt men; or (if you needs will) of the worſt and vileſt, when conſcience is awakened, when they come to lye a dying, and when they ſhall ſtand before God at the laſt day, are to be preferred as the wiſeſt. That everlaſting happineſs cannot be bought too dear, but repentance and ſhame may eaſily. That the hardeſt *doings* or *ſufferings* for Chriſt, are infinitely eaſier than everlaſting miſery. That heaven and glory will more than recompence all thy ſelf-denials, and mortifications, all thy watchings, faſtings, *&c.* and in the mean time, the very hope of it, beſides the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, and his love and grace, and the comforts of his Spirit, will certainly ſweeten all the tediouſneſs of thy way to heaven, with inexpreſſible redundance of ſatisfaction; yea, ſometimes with joy unutterable and full of glory. In ſum, that God is a good Maſter, and his ſervice perfect freedom; for beſides the glorious recompence to come, thy work, Chriſtian, is even now its own reward. If thou believeſt ſtrongly ſuch Aphoriſms as theſe (and he is madder than any in *Bedlam* that doth not believe them) it will be no hard matter, by Gods bleſſing and aſſiſtance, in their ſtrength *to put to flight the armies of the aliens*, at leaſt to ſhield thy ſelf againſt the volleys of fiery darts, which at any time the Tempter ſhall pour upon thee.

——μήτε τι ἔργω πρῆξαι μηδ' εἰπεῖν ὃ-τι τοι μὴ βελ-τιὸν ἦσι. Pythag. carm.

Withdraw thy ſelf, if poſſible, from the occaſions of ſin. It is good ſtanding out of harms way: do not gaze upon temptations, but pray with *David*, *Lord turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity*, Pſalm 119. 37. If thou perceiveſt *thy feet are almoſt gone, thy ſteps had well nigh ſlipt*, it is ſurely high time for thee if thou canſt, to run away; nor will it be reckoned thy cowardize, but thy valour in the day of thine account, thus to retreat from the enemy. It is a very wiſe mans counſel concerning the haunts and converſes of the Profane, *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men, avoid it, paſs not by it, turn*

Rule 8. Pſal. 73. 2.

from it, and paſs away, Prov. 4. 14, 15. Again concerning the ſtrange woman, *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe*, chap. 5. 8. And again concerning occaſions of intemperance, *be not among wine-bibbers, amongſt riotous eaters of fleſh*, chap. 23. 20, & ver. 31. *Look not on the wine when it is red, when it giveth its colour in the cup, when it moveth it ſelf aright*, i.e. when it ſparkles and vapours in the glaſs, when it laughs in thy face, and invites thy lip, then ſhut thy eyes, leſt ſin ſteal in upon thee. Do not imitate the ſilly Lark, which by the pleaſing contemplation of the little piece of glaſs that glitters in the Sun, while the Fowler twirles it about, is enticed nearer and nearer, forgetting or overſeeing the net, which e're long overwhelms it. Vouchſafe not to admit the Tempter to a *Parl*; the Poets fable *Ulyſſes* to have ſtopt his ears at the enchaunting voices of the *Syrens*. Be thou as the deaf Adder to that great *Charmer*: the beſt entertainment thou canſt give him, is——*Get thee behind me Satan*.

Rule 9. Bind thy ſelf before-hand with the ſevereſt of thy reſolutions, not to truſt thy own judgment, when the Temptation begins to get within thee: a man in paſſion is not himſelf, *Periit judicium cum res tranſiit in affectu*. One diſtempered with the *morbus arcuatus*, the *Jaundiſe*, black or yellow, is apt to impute the colour his eye is vitiated with, to every object; who would truſt ſuch a judg of colours? or the palate of one in a Fever, to diſtinguiſh of Taſtes? It is a good rule under the diſorder of temptation, Μήτυε διεῖν, never credit thy own apprehenſions at ſuch a time. If thou takeſt thy ſelf yielding in the leaſt, ſtart back with abhorrence, and chide thy raſhneſs, appealing from thy preſent diſtracted, to thy ancient and wiſer *ſelf*; from thy *ſelf* aſleep and diſordered, to thy *ſelf* awake and ſober, at other times. *Jonah*'s judgment was weak and childiſh (though a Prophet) when he was under that temptation of impatient anger, *Jon.* 4. 9, *I do well to be angry*; a ſaucy and bold anſwer to his God! he ſhould not have truſted his preſent ſentiments, for he was not himſelf. As one that beſpeaks an awakening, will over night deſire his friend not to give ear to him, though (ſaith he) I plead earneſtly to ſleep a little longer, yet do not regard that, for I tell you of it before on purpoſe, and I ſhall thank you when once I am up, for not letting me have my will. Thus tell thy ſelf aforehand, that though under a drowſineſs, and ſlumber of ſpirit, thou art ready to plead for the fleſh, and to feel ſome inclinations to fulfil its luſts, and art very loth to let them go unſatisfied, yet if thou art but reſolute, not to comply with thy own fooliſh and unreaſonable deſires, thou wilt heartily thank thy ſelf; I mean, be entirely glad, when thy eyes are open, that thou haſt overcome thy ſelf, and that Wiſdom and Reaſon, and Conſcience, have got the day. Reſolve to remember this when temptation comes the next time to aſſault thee, and play the man.

Having laid down theſe directions, by way of prevention againſt the time of conflict, to prepare the ſoul aforehand, that in the aſſault it may not be vanquiſhed: I come now to the Chriſtians behaviour in the *fit* and paroxiſm it ſelf, when the luſts of the fleſh are ſtirring. And the great Rule to be obſerved here, is this:

At

As ſoon as ever thou perceiveſt thine affections and luſts begin to grow inordinate, and thy inferiour appetites to rebell, take thy ſelf to task forthwith, and reſiſt them with all thy might. Do not ſtay a moment, delay is unutterably dangerous: who but a mad man, that ſees the Stable or Barn hard by his dwelling-houſe juſt beginning to catch fire, would ſtand ſtill, and ſay, let it alone a little, I would ſee what would come of it? two or three minutes indulgence to the flame will embolden it, without expecting his leave or permiſſion any longer, to devour, and rage, and conſume, and carry all before it in deſpight of his mightieſt reſiſtances; when a little at firſt might have ſaved that vaſt damage, which his folly and loytering hath occaſioned. How contemptible were thoſe fires at firſt, that in few hours have triumpht over ſtately Palaces, and turn'd ſometimes vaſt Cities into heaps of duſt and aſhes? How ſmall an infirmity, and diſtemper neglected, hath uſhered in the moſt fatal ſickneſs? And how often hath a trifling bruiſe or ſtrain, been preface to a *Gangrene*, and the prick of a pin or thorn, not lookt after time enough, enforced the cutting off a leg or arm, nay, proved mortal, and incurable? Advantages to *good*, like *Arithmetical progreſſions*, riſe ſlowly, in fair and even intervals; but advantages to *ill*, like *Geometrical*, grow up preſently from little to vaſt exceſſes.

——— *Facilis deſcenſus Averni:*
Sed revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hic labor, &c. Virg. Æn. 6.

Motion to *ill* is downwards, and like the deſcent of heavy bodies, collects a new *Impetus*, and *moveth* every ſtep with a ſwiftneſs perpetually increaſing, and (if not ſtopt early) ſoon irreſiſtible. Miſchief ſprings apace, grows tall and large, and adult ſuddenly, as *Jonahs gourd* did, in a night. Our paſſage in ſin is with wind and tide increaſing; but in holineſs, with both againſt us. To ſeek the things above, is a ſupernatural motion, and therefore difficult; but the contrary is natural, and therefore eaſie, ἡδὺμὲν τὸ κατὰφύσιν, τὸ δὲ βίαιον λυπηρὸν, as the Philoſopher well determines. Evil is now a-kin to us ſince our degeneracy, and hath vaſt advantages on its ſide, if once it gets an allowed harbour and entertainment in our breaſt.

Galileo, and after him *Gaſſendus*, and others have demonſtrated, that heavy bodies in their deſcent, do in equal times tranſmit unequal ſpaces, continually increaſing according to the progreſſion of *odd numbers*, *Ex. gr.* If in one pulſe, a Bullet fall perpendicularly, one inch, in the next, it will three inches, in the 3*d*, 5, in the 4*th*, 7, *&c.* till the ſwiftneſs grow immenſe and unutterable.

The Enquiry then before us, is, By what Methods a Chriſtian ought to addreſs himſelf to battel, in this ſpiritual warfare? how he may ſo bid defiance to his enemies, as to daunt and vanquiſh them? Let theſe Rules therefore be obſerved for reſiſting and quelling thy luſts and inordinate affections in their firſt ſallies, and in the commencement of the inſurrection.

Awe them with the authority of thy Reaſon and Underſtanding; it is infinitely unbeſeeming a man, that his lower appetites ſhould grow mutinous and untractable, that the τὸ ἄλογον τ ψυχῆς καὶ ἐπιθυμίας, the inferiour *Rule* 1.

ſeriour and brutiſh faculties of our ſouls, ſhould rebel againſt the τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, that ſoveraign faculty of Reaſon. The *Scythians* are reported, when their ſlaves took arms, to have daſht the ſneaking rebels preſently out of countenance, by ſhewing their whips, that well-known weapon. How ſoon doth the preſence of a grave Magiſtrate allay a popular tumult if he comes in ſoon enough, in the beginning of the Riot.

Ille regit dictis animos, & pectora mulcet, Virg. Æn. 1.

God hath made Reaſon the Magiſtrate of the little World; he hath given it a Commiſſion to keep the peace in our ſouls. And ſo far as our minds are illuſtrated and governed by right reaſon, ſo far do they partake of the image of God, of whoſe glorious mind one of the beſt and cleareſt conceptions we can have, is, that it is *infinite and eternal Reaſon*. Do thy *paſſions* begin to riſe in arms? do they grow diſordered and unruly? Let thy *reaſon* come out to them, and ask whether they know their *Maſter?* And let thy ſoul bluſh, with infinite ſcorn, that ever theſe baſe ſlaves ſhould uſurp the throne of their *rightful* Lord, and unman thee, by depoſing *Reaſon*, which is all thou haſt to ſhew that thou art not a beaſt. What an extream ſilly thing is a man in paſſion? Nothing can be more ridiculous and contemptible. Out of love and pity to thy ſelf, O man, do not affront and diſgrace thine immortal ſoul any more, by ſuffering any malepart and ſawcy paſſion to outrage and aſſaſinate thy Reaſon. That was a generous Rule of *Pythagoras*, —— πάντων δὲ μάλιστα αἰσχύνου σαυτὸν, Let a man uſe great reverence and manners to himſelf. Be aſhamed (friend) to do any vile or diſhoneſt action before thy ſelf; though no body be conſcious, yet thy ſoul is, and thou canſt not run away from that. What good will it do thee to contradict the dictates of thine own mind? Is it poſſible for thee to be at peace, when thou falleſt out with thy ſelf? Thou juſtifieſt all the injuries, in the world that others do thee, for thou doſt thy ſelf daily injuries ten millions of times greater than the greateſt others can do to thee. Whoever thou art that deſpiſeſt thy own Reaſon, and permitteſt every ſilly luſt to abuſe *thee*, by ſcorning *that*; thou art a falſe Traytor to thy own ſoul. There are but a very few men that are in their wits; the far greateſt part of mankind, in the greateſt matters, in the higheſt concernments of *a man*, are beſides themſelves; for a mans own ſelf muſt be *a reaſonable creature*; and therefore not to govern ones own mind and affections by Reaſon, is to be mad and diſtracted; if he that looks not to his Family is worſe than an Infidel, what then is he that looks not to his *mind?* what confuſed *Chaos* are moſt mens minds, —— *rudis indigeſtaque moles*? A man makes a fool of himſelf as oft as he prefers his paſſion before his reaſon; the Philoſopher gives us the ſum of this Rule excellently, μηδ' ἀλογίσως σαυτὸν ἔχειν πρὸς μηδὲν ἰθίζε. Accuſtom thy ſelf to act every where like a *reaſonable creature*.

Pyth. in Carm.

Ovid.

Carm. Pyth. a.

Rule 2. If thy diſtempered affections, and luſts, ſlight the authority of thy Reaſon, as thou art a man; bid thy conſcience do its office, as thou art a Chri-

a Chriſtian. Try to awe them with Gods written Word: thus our Saviour thrice repuls'd the Tempter, *Mat.* 4.4,6, 10, by producing Scripture to confront him, *It is written, &c.* Ask thy heart if it knows that hand? whether it dares rebel againſt the expreſs Commands, Statutes, and Ordinances of the living God? Bring out of the Regiſter of Conſcience, the Laws of him that made thee; oppoſe ſome clear text of holy Writ, that comes into thy mind, againſt that very luſt that is now riſing, *Ex. Gr.* If it be carnal fear, *Iſa.* 51. 12. If love of the world, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. If revenge, *Rom.* 12. 19. If impatience under affliction, *Jam.* 1. 12. If diffidence in Gods promiſes, *Numb.* 23. 19. If immoderate anger, *Epheſ.* 4. 26. If pride and arrogance, and ſelf aſſuming, *Mat.* 5. 3. & 11. 20, &c. *Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of ſuch artillery!* whoſe conſcience is rich in theſe Memoirs! Store thy mind with this ſacred treaſure, that as a Scribe inſtructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, thou maiſt (upon all occaſions) bring forth out of thy treaſure things new and old. Hold ſuch Scriptures as are point-blank contrary to the Temptation, before thy conſcience; if it would turn away, compel it to look upon them, and think, I am Gods creature, I muſt obey him; Did ever any rebel againſt him and proſper, *Eine ego ut adverſer?* Is it wiſely done of me, to reſiſt my Maker? to try which is ſtrongeſt, a poor worm, or the Almighty God? And if the love of Gods Commands will not conſtrain thee, let the terrors, the thunders, and lightnings of his Threats perſwade thee, which are all levelled againſt wilful ſinners. And it is not ſafe ſtanding (ſurely) in the very Canons mouth. Peruſe thoſe two Scriptures, and tremble to enter on any known breach of the Law of thy God, *Deut.* 28. 58. & *Iſa.* 45. 9.

Mat. 13. 52.

Terence.

If all this effect nothing, then draw the Curtain, take off the vail from before thy heart, and let it behold the God that ſearcheth it, *Jer.* 17. 10. *Heb.* 4. 13. Shew it the Majeſty of the Lord; ſee how that is deſcribed, *Iſa.* 6. 1, 2, 3. Ask thy ſoul whether it ſees the living God, that ſeeth it? Whether it is aware whoſe eye looks on, *Gen.* 16. 13, 14. Whether it hath no reſpect for God himſelf, who ſtands by, and whoſe pure and glorious eyes, *Hab.* 1. 13, pierce through and through thee. Tell thy heart again and again, that God will not be mocked; that *he is a God of knowledg, and by him actions are weighed*; that he is *a jealous God too, and will by no means clear the guilty.* Bid it conſider well, and look to it ſelf, for God will bring to light every hidden thing of diſhoneſty; he that now ſees, will judg it. Speak to thy unruly luſts as the Town-clerk of *Epheſus* wiſely did to the mutinous Citizens, *Act.* 19. 40, *Sirs, we are in danger to be called in queſtion for this days uproar, there being no cauſe whereby we may give an account of this tumult.*

Rule 3.

1 Sam. 2. 3.

If theſe great *real* arguments be ſlighted, try whether an argument *ad hominem*, drawn from ſenſe will prevail. Awe thy luſts then with the bitterneſs of thine own experience. Conſider how often thou haſt rued their diſorders; what diſmal conſequences have followed upon their tranſports, and how dearly thou haſt paid heretofore for thy connivance at them. Bethink thy ſelf on ſuch a faſhion as this. T'other day I was angry,

Rule 4.

gry, and behaved my self uncomely, put the whole company, or family out of order, disobliged such a dear and faithful friend, by my rashness and folly, in uttering hasty words before I weighed them. O how did I repent me afterwards? How ashamed and abashed, and confounded was I, when I came to my self? So at another time, thus and thus I miscarried my self, and these are the fruits and cursed effects of my *yielding to the beginnings of sin*, and shall I go now and repeat my madness? Had I not smart enough for my folly before; but must I needs play the *fool* and the *beast* again? Ask thy self what thou ailest to forget all the sighs and groans, and bitter tears that thy lust hath already cost thee? and yet would the impudent sin be committed once more; πῶ τὰς φρένας ἐκστήσεται: where are thy wits, man, if thou goest about it? *Sic notus Ulysses?* Was it so sweet a thing to lye under the horrour and agony of a wounded conscience, and under Gods rebukes in secret the last time, that thou must needs venture again? Why wilt thou hurt thy soul, and become a Devil to thy self? Why wilt thou needs break thy peace, by consenting to sin; and not only so, but torment thy self, and kindle a hell in thine own bosom? and all this in despight of all thy warnings? *Ictus Piscator sapit*, the burnt Child dreads the fire: But it seems thou art in love with misery, and weary of thy joy and comfort. Thou hast a mind to be cursed; wretchedness, and woe, and death, are, it seemeth, grown so amiable in thine eyes, as to become thy deliberate choice. Thus upbraid thy self, and do it so long and loud till thou fetchest thy soul again to it self, out of that swoon and lethargy which besotteth it. Give not over chiding and reproaching thy self, till thou makest thy heart sensible and considerate.

Theocrit. in Cyclop.

Rule 5. Labour to cure thy lustings and affections in the first beginning of their disorders, by Revulsion, by drawing the stream and tide another way. As Physitians stop an *Hæmorragie*, *or bleeding* at the Nose, by breathing the *Basilique* vein in the arm, or opening the *Saphæna* in the foot; so may we check our carnal affections, by turning them into spiritual ones, and those either,

1. Of the *same nature*, *Ex. gr.* Catch thy worldly sorrow at the rise; and turn thy mourning into godly sorrow. If thou must needs weep, weep for somewhat that deserves it. Be the occasion of thy grief what it will, loss of estate, relations, *&c.* I am sure thy sins are a juster occasion, for they brought that occasion of mourning upon thee, be it what it will, that thou art now in tears for. Art thou troubled at any danger, full of fears, heart-aking, and confusion? O forget not the *Mother-evil* sin, let that have but its due share, and there will not be much left to spare of these affections for other things.

Is thy desire, thy love, thy joy, too busie about some earthly trifle, some temporal good thing? Pray them to look up a little, and behold thy God, who is altogether lovely, *in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*, Psal. 16. 11. And let everlasting shame stop thy mouth, if thou darest affirm any thing in this wretched world worthy to be named once with the living God for Rivalship,

and competition in thy heart, * sure I am he is the fountain and measure of all goodness. Let but the first and soveraign Good have its due of thy love and desire, thy delight and joy, and the remainder will be little enough for thy creature-comforts. Oh how great a folly is it to dote on husks, and over-look the bread in thy fathers house! *Jer.* 2. 12, 13.

2. Turn thy carnal affections into spiritual ones of a contrary nature. *Ex. gr.* Allay thy worldly sorrow by spiritual joy. Try whether there be not enough in *All-sufficiency* it self, to compensate the loss of any outward enjoyment; whether there will be any great miss or want of a broken Cistern, when thou art at the fountain-head of living waters; whether the light of the Sun cannot make amends for the expiring of a Candle. Chastise thy carnal fears by hope in God. Set on work the grace contrary to the lust that is stirring; if it be pride and vain-glory in the applause of men, think how ridiculous it were for a criminal to please himself in the esteem and honour his fellow prisoners render him, forgetting how guilty he is before his Judg. If thou beginnest to be poured loosely out, and as it were dissolved in frolick mirth and jovialty, correct that vainness and gayety of spirit, by the grave and sober thoughts of death, and judgment, and eternity.

If this avail not, fall instantly to prayer; and indeed all along the whole encounter with thy lusts, *Pray continually*; lift up thy heart to God with sighs and groans unutterable: *Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down!* Tell him, thy lusts are his enemies, as well as thine; tell him they are too strong for thee; beg of him that he would interpose, and make bare his arm, and get himself a glorious name. *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* Intreat him, of all love, to pity thee, even by his very bowels, and not to let the enemy triumph over thee. Tell him thou knowest not what to do, but thy eyes are towards him. Bemoan thy self before him, and plead his glory with him, and his truth and faithfulness. Spread his own gracious promises in his eyes, *Psal.* 27. 14. *Isa.* 40. 28, 29, 30, 31. *Psal.* 55. 22. 1 *Pet.* 5. 7.

Such Ejaculations or Meditations as these, are mighty useful; Gods children find them so in the very paroxism and assault. But if the Temptation continue, get into thy Closet, and humble thy self greatly before thy God, throw thy self at his feet, tell him thou wilt not rise till he hath given thee a token for good; no, thou art resolved there to lye hanging on him, and not to let him go until he bless thee. O how welcome is every honest heart to the Father of Spirits, when it comes on such an errand, and in such a manner to the throne of grace! God cannot chuse but melt in pity and tenderness over his poor desolate ones, when he sees the anguish of their souls. *How can I give thee up, O Ephraim? my bowels are troubled for thee, they will not give me leave to forget thee. Is Ephraim my dear son? I do earnestly remember him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.* Give not over wrestling like *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 26, 27, 28, till thou risest *Israel*, one who hast power with God, and

* καθόσον δυ- τῶ μετεχειν ἐκαστα καλῶ ϗ δεξια ϗ σωζόμενα. καθοσον δὲ ἀπ- λειπε ϗ, αἰ- χεῖ ϗ διαλυόμενα, ϗ φθειρόμενα. Max. Tyr. dissert. 1.

Rule 6.

Isa. 51. 9.

Jer. 31. 20.

Isa. 49. 14.

and prevaileſt. And it is worth obſerving, that the Lord takes pleaſure to be called *the mighty God of Jacob*, and the *Lord God of Iſrael*, as if he reckoned it an honour, that once the worm *Jacob* wreſtled with his Omnipotence, and overcame him; he ſeems to glory in his being conquered; and chuſeth that for his name, and for his memorial throughout generations, which is an everlaſting monument, that a poor frail man got the day of him. So much doth the effectual fervent prayer of the Righteous prevail.

Perhaps ſometime it may be requiſite to joyn ſecret faſting with thy prayer. It may be, the Devil that tempts thee is of that kind, that will not go out but by prayer and faſting, *Mat.* 17. 21. Thus *Daniel* lay proſtrate at Gods feet, *till a hand touched him, and ſet him upon his knees; and the voice ſaid to him, O Daniel greatly beloved, &c.* Dan. 10. 2, 3. compared with 10, 11, and with 18, 19, verſes.

Rule 7. When thou haſt done this, Riſe up, and buckle on the *ſhield of faith, which is able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*, Epheſ. 6. 16. Cloath thy ſoul with an heroick confidence, in the power and faithfulneſs of thy God, and in the name and majeſty of the Lord of hoſts bid battel to thy luſts, and to all the powers of darkneſs. Take heed of going out in thy own ſingle ſtrength, for luſt *hath caſt down many ſtrong men wounded.* While thou art keeping thine own heart with all diligence, forget not by faith to bring the great keeper of *Iſrael* in. If any other man could have kept his own heart, ſure the man after Gods own heart could have done it.——*Si Pergama dextrâ Defendi poſſent, etiam hac defenſa fuiſſent.* But the matter of *Uriah* and *Bathſheba* ſtands on record to all poſterity to the contrary: For *except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain*, Pſal. 127. 1. Do not venture to grapple with the roaring Lion, but in the ſtrength of the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, who is alſo the Lamb of God, and the great ſhepherd of *Iſrael, that carries his lambs in his boſome*; and whither ſhould the purſued Lamb betake it ſelf, but into that ſhepherds armes? *in time of trouble* (ſpiritual as well as other) *he will hide thee in the ſecret of his Tabernacle, in his pavilion will he hide thee, and ſet thee as upon a rock*, Pſalm 27. 5. He never fails the eyes of them that look up to him, nor makes his people aſhamed of their hope. What time thou art afraid, truſt in him. His name is a ſtrong tower. Caſt thy care upon him, and expect the ſame pity from thy God, which the men of *Jabeſh Gilead* found from *Saul*, when *Nahaſh* (the barbarous *Ammonite*) would have put out their right eyes, *To morrow ere the Sun be hot, ye ſhall have help*, 1 Sam. 11. 9. If the King of *Iſrael's* bowels yearned over thoſe poor men, ſhall not the bowels of the God of *Iſrael* over thoſe that fear him? Yes, upon his honour, truth, and faithfulneſs, he will not ſuffer that cruel *Naaſh* (to allude to the ſignification of the word) that old Serpent, to have his will upon them: if he doth not come *to day*, he will *to morrow* e're the Sun be hot. *Lift up your heads therefore O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlaſting doors, and the King of Glory ſhall come in. Who is this King of Glory? The LORD ſtrong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battel,*

Prov. 7. 26.

Virg. Æneid.

Iſa. 40. 11.

נחש Serpens Hebr.

Pſal.

Pſal. 24. 7, 8. Thus was *Joſeph* reſcued from the *Archers that ſhot at him, and ſorely grieved him. His bow abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong by the arms of the mighty God of Jacob*, Gen. 49. 23, 24.

I come at length to the Uſe.

Uſe. We are to learn hence, That our ſouls are not as they came out of the Father of Spirits hands, they appear as it were wrong riſen in the world, and begin to tread awry the very firſt ſteps they meaſure on the ſtage of Earth. All the Symptoms of degeneracy are upon them. The beſt of men that ever yet bleſt the earth with their Reſidence upon it (except that *Son of man* who was only ſo by the mothers ſide, being by the *Fathers* the only begotten Son of the eternal God) had fleſh luſting in them unto ſin. Which is as convincing an Argument, that humane nature is blemiſhed, and infected, that it hath received a μίασμα, a ſtain and venome, as the ἐξανθήματα, are of a peſtilential diſeaſe, whoſe breakings out, diſplay the contagion within. If the *Carbuncle* and the *Tokens* proclaim the *Plague*; or the ſpots diſcover a peſtilential fever? or the *Variolæ* (thoſe peſtulous effloreſcencies, which we commonly name the *Small Pox*) argue the precipitation of the blood, by ſome latent malignity; certainly the luſtings of the fleſh in all men, demonſtrate that the very nature of man on earth is now blaſted, and corrupted.

1. *Information.*

Methinks the *Divine perfection*, and *our own imperfection*, are the two greateſt Senſibles in the world, both of them equally, that is, immenſely clear, and diſcernable. For the *former* is no leſs illuſtriouſly undeniable, than is the being, light, and beauty of the Sun in the Firmament at noonday: And the *latter* is no leſs evident and conſpicuous than the obſcurity and horror of Midnight-darkneſs. Not to *ſee* the one is to be ἄθεος *without God in the world*; and not to feel the other (for it is like the *Ægyptian* darkneſs, *Exod.* 10. 21. that may be felt by all that are not *paſt feeling*) is to be *without* or *beſides* ones ſelf.

Now ſince all the reaſon in the world conſents to the truth of that Aphoriſm of the Philoſopher, (παντὸς ἀεὶ κρεῖττόν τι γίνεται,) that the beſt and moſt excellent mind is the parent of the Univerſe, and an Almighty ever-living goodneſs is the ſource and root of all things, ſince heaven and earth ſay *Amen*, and again *Amen*, *Hallelujah* to that Oracle of the Pſalmiſt, *The work of God is honourable and glorious*, Pſal. 111. 3. *And all that God made was very good*, Gen. 1 31. No wonder if it puzzled all Philoſophy πόθεν τὸ κακὸν; Whence humane nature came to be thus vitiated and debauched? What are the fountains of this great *Deep* of ſin within us, which like the troubled Sea, is perpetually thus caſting out mire and dirt? Sure enough ſo univerſal an effect as this calamity of mankind, muſt have a cauſe as univerſal.

Hierocles moſt divinely concludes, ἀδιάλειπτος ἄλλη πρόσεσις τῶν πάντων ποιήσεως, ἄλογος αἰτία, πλὴν τῆς καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἀγαθότητος, ἀγαθοῦ γὰρ φύσις ὁ θεὸς, ἀγαθῷ δὲ ἐοικὸς περὶ ὀλιγωρὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγίνεται φθόνος, in Carm. Pyth.

The *Socinians* here, and others, will have us believe that we all are born as innocent as *Adam* in *Paradiſe*; that is (ſay they) in an *æquilibrium* and perfect indifferency to *good* and *evil*, aſſigning no other cauſe of the general corruption of mens lives and manners, but the infection of example, and evil cuſtom, which is methinks as wiſe a gueſs, as to affirm Iſa. 57. 20.

the Wolf and Vulture to be bred and hatcht with as ſweet and harmleſs a nature, as the innocent Lamb, or loving Turtle, but only the naughty behaviour, and ill example of their Anceſtors, and companions, have debauched them into ravenouſneſs, and ill manners.

The *Manichees* (as St. *Auſtin* tells us, who was himſelf for ſeveral years before his Converſion of that Hereſie) thought that all the evil in the World ſprang from an Almighty and an eternal principle of Evil, counter-working, and over-bearing God, whom they held the oppoſite eternal principle of goodneſs. But ſince the very formal notion of God, involveth infinite perfection; and that of ſin, meer imperfection; it is a perfect contradiction, that evil ſhould be infinite, if good be ſo; It were to make imperfection perfect, and meer impotency Omnipotent. Therefore there can be but one God, who is Almighty goodneſs. And as poſſible it is, that the Sun ſhould darken the world by ſhining, as Almighty goodneſs ſhould do any hurt in the world, or make any evil. God is the Author of all the good in the world, but ſin and miſery are of our making, *Hoſ.* 13. 9.

Much wiſer than either of the two former, was the conjecture of the *Pythagoreans* and *Platoniſts*, though Heathens, who having nothing elſe to conſult (as wanting the divine Revelation of holy Scripture) but their own *faculties*, embraced the conceit, that all humane ſouls were created in the beginning *upright*, and placed by God in happier manſions, in purer and higher regions of the Univerſe, until at length they did, ἐκπεσόντες τὴν θείαν ἀζωΐαν, τῇ ἀπὸ θεοῦ φυγῇ, as *Hierocles* phraſeth it, *i.e.* till they fell from the *divine life*, and became inhabitants of earthly Tabernacles, bringing their fallen and degenerate natures along with them. This opinion had of old the general conſent of the *Jews*, as appeareth, *Joh.* 9. 2. and yet hath, as *Men. Ben Iſrael* in his Book *De Reſurrectione mortuorum*, witneſſeth. Among the Chriſtians *Origen* is in the number of its Sectaries, in his Books περὶ ἀρχῶν, and ſome few of the Ancients.

But as much as is neceſſary for us to know about this great Enquiry, God hath (bleſſed be his goodneſs) ſufficiently revealed in the three firſt Chapters of *Geneſis*, compared with *Pſal.* 51. 5. *Eccleſ.* 7. 29. *Rom.* 12. 5, *&c.* And he is as wiſe as he need be in ſo great a point, that knows how to underſtand theſe Scriptures according to the Analogy of Faith, and conſiſtency with the divine perfections, and that ſo believeth them, as to put that and no other ſenſe and interpretation upon them, which is worthy of the glorious Attributes, and excellent Majeſty of the living God: Although ſome difficulties will remain perhaps inſuperable to us, in this our preſent eſtate on earth.

Uſe 2. Exhortat.

I have already in ſome meaſure diſcovered the Myſteries and ſecrets of this bleſſed art of checking ſin in the beginnings of it. Let me now perſwade the practiſe of theſe holy Rules; let us reſolve in the ſtrength of Chriſt to reſiſt theſe luſtings of the fleſh. Take the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *Watch ye, ſtand faſt in the faith, quit your ſelves like men,* 1 *Cor.* 16. 13.

Ἄνεχεσ ἴσθι φίλοι μήποτε δὲ ἐκ δυεῖν ἀλλῆς. Hom.

Let

Let me preſs this with a few Conſiderations.

1. The more thou yieldeſt, the more thou mayeſt. Sin is unſatiable, it will never ſay *it is enough*. Give it an inch, it will take an ell: See the ſad example of *Peter* denying his Lord, *Mat.* 26. 1. He was only timerous, he follows afar off, *v.* 58. 2. At the next ſtep he denies his Lord openly before them all, *v.* 70. 3. He adds an oath to it, *v.* 72. And laſtly, *v.* 74. he falls a curſing and ſwearing, as if he meant to out-ſin the vileſt there. It is no wiſdom to try concluſions between fire and Gun-powder in the heap. Who but a fool would unlock the door of his houſe, when it is beſet with Thieves, and excuſe it, he did but turn the key, that was all. Why, he need do no more, to undo himſelf; they will eaſily do all the reſt.

2. It is the quarrel of the Lord of Hoſts, in which thou fighteſt: let thy courage riſe in proportion to the goodneſs of thy cauſe, and the honour of that great Prince and Captain under whoſe banner thou ſerveſt. Upon thy good behaviour and addreſs in Arms, depends much of the renown and honour of Chriſtianity. A cowardly Soldier is the reproach of his Commanders. Thou haſt a noble General, O Chriſtian, that hath done, and finiſhed perfectly whatever concerns thy Redemption from the powers of darkneſs. *To him that overcometh will he give to ſit on his throne, even as he overcame, and is ſet down on his fathers throne*, Rev. 3. 23. Do valiantly and worthily. Follow thy victorious Leader, let all that know thee, ſee that Religion is no mean and feeble thing; that the School of Chriſt breeds the excellent of the earth; that the Divine life is the moſt powerful principle in the World; that the Spirit of God in thee, and his grace, is ſtronger than all thy luſts and corruptions. Not he that talks moſt, or profeſſeth moſt, but he that acts and lives moſt as a Chriſtian, ſhall be the *man whom the King delights to honour*. *Ce, & fortuna... ceſaris.*

3. The luſts of the fleſh are thy greateſt enemies, as well as Gods; *they war againſt thy ſoul*, 1 Pet. 2. 11. To reſiſt them feebly, is to do, not only the work of the Lord, but of thy Soul, negligently.

4. It is eaſie vanquiſhing at firſt in compariſon. A fire newly kindled, is ſoon quenched; and a young thorn or bramble eaſily pulled up. The fierce Lion may be tamed, when a whelp: but if thou ſtay a little, there will be no dealing with a luſt any more, than with a ſavage Beaſt of prey. Grace will loſe, and corruption get ſtrength continually by delaying.

5. If thou reſiſteſt, the victory is thine, *Jam.* 4. 7. And in my Text, *Walk*, &c. *and ye ſhall not fulfill the luſts of the fleſh*. Thou canſt never be conquered, if thou wilt not yield. Stand but to it, and thou art invincible; while thou art unwilling, all the Devils in hell cannot force thee to ſin. Temptation puts on its ſtrength, as the will is. Ceaſe but to love the ſin, and the temptation is anſwered. Indeed, if thou chuſeſt to be a ſlave, thou ſhalt be one. Nothing but thy own choice can undo thee.

Sixthly, Conſider what thou doſt; if thou fulfilleſt the luſts of the fleſh, thou provokeſt thy heavenly Father, rebelleſt againſt him, and *Rebellion is as witchcraft, and ſtubborneſs as Idolatry*. Thou *crucifieſt Jeſus Chriſt afreſh, and putteſt him to open ſhame*. Is this thy love, and thanks to thy Lord, to whom thou art ſo infinitely beholding? Canſt thou find in thy heart to put thy

Spear again in his side? Hath he not suffered yet enough? Is his bloody passion nothing? Must he bleed again? Ah monster of ingratitude! Ah perfidious Traytor as thou art, thus to requite thy Master! *Again,* thou grievest thy Comforter, and is that wisely done? Who shall comfort thee, if he depart from thee grieved? Or is it ingenuous, thus unworthily to treat that noble Guest, to affront Gods sacred Spirit to his very face? and in despight and mockery of him, to side with his Enemy, the Flesh? Is this thy kindness to thy best Friend, thy faithful Counsellor, thy infallible Guide, thy Minister, and Oracle, thy sweet and only Comforter? What need I add, that thou breakest thy peace, woundest thy conscience, forfeitest the loss of Gods countenance, and makest a gap in the divine protection for all evil to rush in at.

Seventhly, and lastly, Consider the invaluable benefit of resisting, of not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, in two great Instances.

1. Unutterable joy and pleasure will be shed abroad in thy Soul, as often as thou gettest the day. I know no greater triumph than that of a Christian, when *he is more than conqueror through Christ that loves him.* O the peace, the joy, and holy glorying in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that a good man is even ravisht, and caught up into the third Heavens with, when the Lord covers his head in the day of Battel, and lifts it up above his spiritual enemies. To vanquish ones self, is a nobler exploit than to subdue a City, *Prov.* 16. 32. Nay, a vaster Conquest, then if one could, with that great *Macedonian* Captain, atchieve the empty title of the Vanquisher of the world.

2. Every Conquest will encrease thy strength and dexterity against the next assault: So that when the vanquisht lust recruits its forces, thou wilt be able to outvie thy self, and become more dextrous every time.

Nay, the mortifying of one earthly member (like the cutting off a limb from the natural body) will make the whole body of sin tremble, all the rest of thy Lusts will fare the worse, and by consent languish. So that every victory over any one corruption, weakens that, and all the rest, and breaks the way for future Conquests.

How

How Miniſters or Chriſtian Friends may, and ought to apply themſelves to Sick Perſons for their good, and the diſcharge of their own Conſcience?

Job XXXIII. 23, 24:

If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs; then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ranſom.

THeſe words are part of *Elihu*'s Diſcourſe uttered by way of Reprehenſion and Conviction to *Job*, and by way of Vindication and Apology for God in his dealings with men; and although he premiſeth this, that God giveth no account of his matters, *ver.* 13. yet he doth *ex abundanti*, give an acconnt for God, and makes a defence, or gives a *rationale* of Gods proceedings with men, *&c.* where he ſhews that it is not mans torment or ruin that God deſires, but his reformation and amendment: And that it may appear how ſincerely and fervently he deſires it, he ſhews that there are ſeveral ways and means which God uſeth, which are moſt powerful and likely to produce it.

1. He ſpeaks to men in dreams, *ver.* 15, *&c.*

2. (When that will not do) by afflictions, *ver.* 19. *&c.*

3. To make thoſe afflictions more intelligible and more effectual, he ſends a *meſſenger*, &c. This is the buſineſs of the Text, *If there be with him, &c.* wherein you may obſerve two parts.

1. A ſuppoſition, *ver.* 23. *If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter*, &c. 2. A poſition, *ver.* 24. *Then he is gracious to him*, &c. The words may be called, the ſick mans cordial, or his reſtorative, wherein you may obſerve: 1. The patient, expreſſed in the word *him*. 2. The diſeaſe, his danger,

danger, and misery——*he is going down to the pit.* 3. The Physician, who is described: 1. *Ab officio*, by his office, *a messenger.* 2. *Ab opere*, by his work, *an interpreter.* 3. *A præstantia*, a rare man, *one of a thousand*——*multis e millibus unus.* 4. The Physick, *to shew unto a man his uprightness.* 5. The cure, *then he is gracious*, &c. Where are considerable,

1. The quality of it, the kind of the cure; deliver him from going down into the pit, *i. e.* from mortal sickness.

2. The spring of it, Gods grace, he is gracious.

3. The meritorious cause of it, I have found a ransom.

4. The declaration of it, he saith, *&c.*

The difficulties are neither many or great, yet some things there are which need explication; *If a messenger*] an Angel; *i. e.* by office, not by nature, for so the word is oft used in Scripture, both in the Old Testament, *Mal.* 3. 1; *Behold, I will send my messenger*, Hebr. מלאכי my Angel, which the Infallible Interpreter, the Lord Jesus, tells us was meant of *John* the *Baptist*, Mat. 11. 10, *This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send a messenger*, &c. and in the New Testament, *Rev.* 2. and 3, where the Pastors of the several Churches are called Angels: and so it is most fitly understood here, both because God did then and still doth most generally use the Ministry of men rather than Angels in counselling and comforting afflicted men; and because he is called one of a thousand, a phrase which implys as his excellency and fitness for that work, so the insufficiency of most of the same kind for it; which must not be charged upon the meanest of Gods elect Angels.

An interpreter] *viz.* of the mind and will of God: Christ is the great interpreter, *Joh.* 1. 18. but he when he ascended on high, gave forth this gift, and left us interpreters in his stead, *Eph.* 4. 11, *&c.*

To shew unto a man his righteousness] *i. e.* mans own righteousness (to say nothing of the other senses); for it is the sin and unrighteousness of a man which causeth his disease, and the sense of that sin which makes his disease bitter and formidable: sin is the sting of every affliction: now then *omnis curatio fit per contraria*, all cures are wrought by contraries; when therefore a faithful Messenger or Minister of Christ having made the sick man sensible of his sin, and afterwards of the pardon of it, and when he comes to discover to him his righteousness, uprightness, holiness, *then God is gracious*, &c. although it is not at all impossible that here may be a reference to Christs righteousness, for *Job* is no stranger to that, and the word *ransom* carries an evident relation thither. So that both may be conjoyned.

Then he (i.e. God) *is gracious*] God is always gracious in himself, in his own nature, but he is gracious to none, but in his own way, and upon his own terms. God is not gracious to unrighteous and unholy persons: but when men return from their sins, *&c. God is gracious, and saith*, i.e. God saith, *Deliver him*——He saith so to his Minister, he gives him Commission to deliver him, *i.e.* to declare him to be delivered, God delivers men *authoritative & realiter*, Ministers only *Ministerialiter & declarative*.

clarative: it is an uſual phraſe; Miniſters are ſaid to do that which they declare God will do, *Jer.* 1. 10, *I have ſet thee over Kingdoms and Nations* (ſaith God to *Jeremiah*) *to root out, and pull down, and deſtroy*, i. e. *to declare that I will do it.*

I have found a ranſom—I have received ſatisfaction, *i.e.* in the death of my Son, which was a ranſom ſatisfactory for the ſins of his people. And farther, it is by vertue of this ranſom that Gods people are delivered, not only from hell, but from any other miſeries. Indeed, as Divines diſtinguiſh of the reſurrection of the godly, and the wicked, ſo the temporal deliverances which wicked men receive, they are the effects of common providence; but thoſe which Chriſts members receive, they have as the fruits of Chriſts purchaſe. And well ſaith God, *I have found a ranſom*: for it is beyond the wit of men or Angels to find out ſuch an admirable way for mans ſalvation: Thus you have had the coherence, diviſion, and ſenſe of the words.

There are ſeveral Doctrines which theſe words would afford, but I ſhall forbear the very mention of them, and only ſpeak of this one, which falls to my ſhare.

Doct. *That the ſeaſonable inſtruction of ſick and languiſhing perſons, is a work, as of great advantage, ſo of great skill and difficulty.*

I need not ſpend much time in the proof, yet ſomething muſt be ſaid of it: there are two branches.

1. It is of great advantage. 2. It is of great difficulty.

1. That it is a work of great advantage. It is convenient to ſay ſomething of this, becauſe I take it to be a common miſtake of many perſons, they are apt to think, that ſick bed applications are in a manner uſeleſs and ineffectual: it may be a diſcouragement which the Devil propoſeth to Miniſters or others, to make them neglect this work, or be formal in it, eſpecially when the perſons are ignorant or profane: the Devil may ſuggeſt the invalidity of a ſick-bed repentance, the cuſtomarineſs and hypocriſie of ſick-bed deſires, *&c.* Now to obviate ſuch ſuggeſtions, conſider theſe things.

1. That the inſtruction of ſick perſons is Gods inſtitution, ſo you ſee in the Text——*a meſſenger, i.e.* one ſent of God to this purpoſe: Now Gods inſtitutions are not in vain; every inſtitution of God carries a promiſe in its bowels to him that doth not *ponere obicem*, that doth rightly uſe it: Miniſters or Chriſtian friends may go about it with much comfort, for it is Gods work, as he ſaid, *Have not I commanded you*, &c? It is one of thoſe ways (as you ſee in the Chapter) which God ordained to reclaim ſinners: and when you attempt it, you may expect Gods concurrence. You may pray in faith for Gods aſſiſtance in his Ordinance.

2. Gods mercy is propoſed by himſelf, and may be offered by Miniſters, even to languiſhing perſons: it is true, it muſt be done cautiouſly (as you ſhall hear) but it may be done. God doth indefinitely tender his mercy to all, and we muſt not limit where God limits not. Miniſters may ſafely follow Gods example. And whereas it may be thought that ſuch men only come to God as driven by neceſſity: you muſt know that

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God is ſo gracious, that he receives even ſuch whom meer neceſſity drives to him; and indeed all true converts are firſt perſwaded to come to God by the ſenſe of their own neceſſities, though afterwards they are elevated to a more noble diſpoſition; God never rejected any upon this ground: How many came to Chriſt meerly in ſenſe of their bodily maladies, and were ſent away with ſpiritual cure? Chriſt received her that came not to him till ſhe had in vain tried all other Phyſicians. So in that parable of the Prodigal (wherein God is pleaſed to repreſent the methods of his grace in the converſion and ſalvation of ſinners) you ſhall find that God doth not reject that poor prodigal, becauſe he was forced home by that, *Durum telum, neceſſitas*, by inſuperable ſtraits and difficulties.

3. Sick-bed repentance is not wholly impoſſible (though it be hard): ſickneſs is one means that God uſeth to work repentance. God can work repentance even upon a ſick-bed; and it is God that muſt do it, even in health; and to ſpeak truly and ſtrictly, although the means of repentance be more probable, and the truth of repentance more diſcernable in health than in ſickneſs, yet the practiſe of repentance is as hard a work in health as in ſickneſs, ſeeing in both caſes it is the great work of the Omnipotent God, who hath ever challenged it as his royal prerogative to give repentance; whatever thoſe *hoſtes gratiæ Chriſti* (as *Auſtin* calls them) ſay to the contrary; ſo that in ſhort, with men, repentance is always impoſſible, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his ſpots? then may ye alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do evil*, Jer. 13.23. but with God it is always poſſible. And yet to prevent the abuſe of this, by a preſumptuous putting off repentance to the time of ſickneſs and death, upon this pretence; I muſt add, that ſuch as put off repentance on ſuch a pretext, do ſeldom meet with it. God doth ſeldom give repentance to ſuch perſons: and it is a general obſervation of all ſerious Divines, That late repentance is ſeldom true, though true repentance is never late: it being the juſt judgment of God, that they that intend to mock God by putting off repentance, ſhould deceive themſelves, and die without repentance.

2. That it is a work of great difficulty, might eaſily be demonſtrated, but that will appear in the further proſecution of it all along, only there are two Arguments which the Text ſuggeſts.

1. That it is a work which God hath put into the hands of his chief Officers, his Miniſters, who ought to be the moſt accompliſhed perſons of all others, *&c.* this is one of thoſe works for which God hath vouchſafed ſuch ſingular gifts unto his Meſſengers.

2. That it is not every Miniſter neither who is fit for this work, and therefore here it is required, that he be one of a thouſand.

But this I ſhall paſs over, and come to that which is allotted to me, the reſolution of this great and important caſe of Conſcience: *How Miniſters or Chriſtian friends may and ought to apply themſelves to ſick perſons for their good, and the diſcharge of their own conſciences.* I take it to be one of the hardeſt parts of the Miniſterial work to make ſeaſonable applications to ſuch perſons. I ſhall therefore endeavour to anſwer it, though not

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ſo fully as the point deſerves, yet ſo far as the brevity of this Exerciſe will permit, in theſe eight Propoſitions or Directions:

1. Endeavour muſt be uſed to underſtand the ſtate of the ſick perſon; As Phyſitians do by ſick perſons, they enquire into the manner of their life, diet, *&c.* it is a great ſtep to the cure, to know the Patients temper, becauſe as bodily ſo ſpiritual Phyſick muſt be ſuited to the temper, and diſpoſition, and condition of the Patient. And as Phyſitians take pains in this by conference with friends, and by examining the Patient; ſo ſhould Miniſters by diſcourſe with religious acquaintance, and by ſearching conference with the ſick perſons, endeavour to find out the truth, for why ſhould not men be as accurate in healing mens ſouls, as their bodies, ſince the very Heathen could ſay, That all our care ſhould be tranſlated from the things of the body, to the ſoul? ſo *Epictetus* in his 63 Chapter, Ἀρχὴ σημεῖον τὸ ἐνδιατρίβειν τοῖς περὶ τὸ σῶμα, &c. And as for the body, men prize thoſe Phyſicians moſt that beſt know their temper, *&c.* ſo ſhould ſick perſons prefer *(cæteris paribus)* that faithful Miniſter that hath moſt knowledg of them, *&c.*

2. The great buſineſs is to bring the ſick man to a true ſight of his ſtate and condition: indeed this is an happy thing, whatever his condition be. If his condition be ſound and good, then it is an happineſs to know it, that he may have the comfort of it: if it be bad, yet it is an happineſs to know it, that a man may be capable of counſel, and put into the way to amend it: it is true, evil men, like perſons much in debt, care not to look into their books, and underſtand their debts, but they muſt be brought to it. And the worſe thy condition is, the more art thou concerned to diſcover it: for to be ignorant of thy condition, if it be good, only hinders thee from comfort; but if it be bad, it hinders thee from ſalvation: you and they muſt both conſider, that as the heart is always deceitful, ſo then eſpecially for three reaſons amongſt others. 1. Then men are impotent and unable to examine themſelves, their natural parts are weakned, the eyes of their mind clouded: their mind is diverted by bodily pains that it cannot attend, and ſo may ſooner be cheated. 2. Then men are ſloathful and liſtleſs, as to all ſpiritual exerciſes: if even good men are ſloathful in their moſt healthful times, how much more evil men in times of ſickneſs? The liſtleſneſs of the body generally makes an anſwerable impreſſion upon the faculties of the ſoul; that being a received truth amongſt Phyſicians and Philoſophers, and ratified by daily experience, that *mores animi, ſequuntur temperamentum corporis.* 3. In times of ſickneſs men are greedy of comfort, and ſo will catch even at a ſhadow, *&c.* Upon all theſe grounds there needs the more caution, to ſet before his eyes the folly and miſery of ſelf-deceit, eſpecially in everlaſting matters.

3. Miniſters and others muſt take great heed, leſt while they avoid one extream, they run upon another, which is a common error in practiſe; ſome for the prevention of deſpair, have made ſuch unſeaſonable applications of comfort, as have begotten preſumptuous hopes. Others again to prevent preſumption, have ſo indiſcreetly aggravated things, as to ren-

der them hopeleſs, and ſo careleſs, *&c.* there muſt therefore be a prudent contemperation of things together: as the wiſe Phyſitian mixeth ſeveral ingredients, he puts in indeed things of a ſharp and corroding nature, which may eat out or remove the noxious humours, but addeth to them things of a more gentle temperature, which by their lenity may correct the acrimony of the former: God himſelf ſets us a copy by the mouth of *Samuel*, 1 Sam. 12. 29, *You have done all this wickedneſs*, there is the corroſions, he faithfully diſcovers that, and doth not dawbe with them, yet, leſt the diſeaſe ſhould rather be exaſperated than removed, he adds this healing counſel, *yet turn not aſide from following the Lord*, and this Cordial, *ver.* 22, *The Lord will not forſake his people*; and *Ezra* follows it, *Ezra* 10. 2, *We have treſpaſſed againſt God, and have taken ſtrange wives, yet now there is hope in Iſrael concerning this, now therefore let us make a covenant with God.*

4. The ſame methods are not to be uſed to all ſick perſons: you might as well give the ſame pill to all diſeaſed perſons, whereas that which would cure one, will kill another; you may as well make one ſuit for all bodies; diſcreet Phyſitians diverſifie their applications, according to the difference of the Patients diſpoſition and condition; ſo here. And there are many differences to be eyed here.

1. Difference of tempers, whether tender, or rough and ſtubborn, as you read it is the husbandman's diſcretion that the fitches are not threſhed with a threſhing inſtrument, neither is the cart-wheel turned upon the cummin, but the fitches are beaten out with a ſtaff, and the cummin with a rod, *Iſa.* 28. 27. ſo it muſt be the diſcretion of a Miniſter, to have reſpect to the different tempers of men, in his applications to them: it is ſaid of Chriſt, he taught the Diſciples as they were able to bear.

2. Difference of education and converſation, ſome have been muzled in ignorance, others brought up in the knowledg of the truth, not conſidering of this, occaſions much miſchief: Diſcourſe to an ignorant perſon of the neceſſity of faith and repentance, you loſe your labour oft times, he conceits he hath believed and repented; for he takes faith to be a believing, though without any grounds, Tnat God hath pardoned him, and repentance a crying God mercy, *&c.* one muſt conſider where foundations muſt be laid ——— and where we need only raiſe ſuperſtructions: ſome have a looſe and profane education, others civil and religious: the former require more terror, the latter more caution, leſt they deceive themſelves.

3. Difference of guilt. Great difference is to be made in the handling of ſinners of a ſmaller ſize, and inveterate ſinners: as God expects, ſo Miniſters muſt endeavour that ſorrow may bear ſome proportion with the ſin ——— *Peter* having ſinned grievouſly, wept bitterly, *Mat.* 27. *ult.*

5. It is a very bad guide to follow the counſels or deſires of ſick perſons or their carnal friends. It fares with faithful Miniſters, as with honeſt and able Phyſitians, that are many times ill thought of by the ſick-

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man, and fooliſh friends, when they put him to pain, or trouble, they charge him with cruelty, and delighting to torment the poor man unneceſſarily, and it may be think of diſcharging him, and getting a Phyſician that will deal more gently with him: whereas indeed he is the ſick mans beſt friend, and many times ſhould he not pain him, he would kill him: ſo is it here, Come to a ſick man, he crys, Comfort for Gods ſake, ſo ſay his friends, and they think all is done, if they can get comfort: why, you ſhall have it, but in due time; you ſhall have eaſe, health, *&c.* but you muſt be contented to wait for it, and expect it in due order, firſt you muſt be ſick; oft times that Phyſick is the beſt, which makes you ſickeſt; you ſhall be healed, but if you would proceed regularly, and work a true cure, you muſt firſt have your wound ſearched, and then healed, elſe yon have only a palleative cure, and the wound will feſter inwardly: and it is an horrible miſtake of ſick perſons, they think comfort is all they are to look after. I tell you, it is not preſent comfort, but everlaſting happineſs, you muſt make your buſineſs to get: it is not *Auguſtus* his εὐθανασία, to die quietly like a Lamb, (as the vulgar phraſe it) but a Scripture εὐθανασία, to die the death of the righteous: it is not ſo much a calm, and ſweet, and eaſie paſſage, (the fiſhes have that, when they ſwim down the ſweet ſtream of *Jordan*, into the dead ſea, where they periſh) but a ſafe harbour; one may go to heaven in a ſtorm, and to hell in a calm; and which is better, judg you: thoſe wretches in *Pſal.* 73. have no bands in their death, and yet death hath dominion over them. Comfort is not the great buſineſs you need.

6. The ſame courſe for ſubſtance is to be taken for the converſion of ſick and healthful perſons, *&c.* there is but one way to heaven, for all perſons; and therefore conſider with your ſelves what you would do, if they were in health, and what were neceſſary then, why, that ſame courſe you muſt take now: and if it be more troubleſome to ſick perſons, they may thank themſelves for it, who neglected the time of their health, *&c.* indeed ſick men are apt to favour themſelves, and to think God will, accept of leſs from them, than others, whereas, if poſſible, they have need to do more than others, and to make the more haſte, having the leſs time for their Work.

7. The greateſt care muſt be to keep ſick perſons from thoſe errours whereby ſuch perſons commonly miſcarry, ſuch as theſe,

1. Inſenſibleneſs of their danger, whereas the firſt ſtep to cure, is to know ones malady. It is a dreadful thing to ſee poor ignorant and unconverted ſinners, at the very brink of the pit, ready to drop into hell, and not at all affected with it, *&c.* If ever you mean to do them any good, you muſt awaken them out of that mortal ſleep or lethargy, lighten their eyes with a conviction of their danger, leſt they ſleep the ſleep of death.

2. Willingneſs to be deluded. You may know it thus: If a daubing Miniſter or friend offers comfort, how greedily they catch it: They will receive comfort upon any grounds, nay upon no grounds, but upon the bare words, it may be of a time-ſerving, and man-pleaſing Miniſter. But

let a serious and faithful Minister come to them, and shew them their sad, and sinful, and hazardous condition, and demonstrate it by irrefragable arguments, they will not yield to it. But as St. *Peter* speaks, 2 *Pet.* 3.5. λανθάνει αὐτοὺς τοῦτο θέλοντας, this they willingly are ignorant of. You must possess them with the folly of such a temper, the unavoidable misery of self-deluding persons, *&c.* and the dread of disappointment when too late.

3. Carelesness and listlesness; This is the temper of many, knowing the difficulty of believing, repenting, *&c.* and remembring their own guilt, they cast off the care of that, which they think will be to no purpose, *&c.* You must therefore possess them with the necessity of Christian carefulness; what madness it is to be careless now, which is the only season of caring to any purpose, *&c.* What folly it is to free themselves from the care of a few days, to ascertain to themselves everlasting care and torment, *&c.* Also you must possess them with the benefit of this care, and laying it to heart, *&c.* That it is Gods course in opening the heart, to stir up this care.

4. Resting in generals. *Dolosus versatur in generalibus.* This deceived many in Hell: You may discourse excellently against sin in the general, and raise in them some passion against it, yet not profit them at all, *&c.* For true repentance takes notice of particular sins, *&c.* And as generals have no existence, but in the particulars, according to principles of Philosophy: So it is sin in particular, which doth primarily affect the heart of a true penitent.

5. The concealment of some hidden way of wickedness, I believe, hath sent many to Hell; they would never make their disease known, through fear of shame, *&c.* As some persons have died of those diseases which they have smothered. It is true, a man is not bound to make confession of all his sins to a Minister, as we rightly assert against Papists: but yet all Divines grant, that in many cases it is both expedient and necessary to acknowledg thy wickedness to men: and to say nothing of those cases wherein it is sometimes necessary, nor of many reasons which make it frequently expedient, I shall only instance in one, which is sufficient of it self many times, that the Physician knowing more exactly thy malady, may more effectually proportion his remedy. Possess them with this in such cases, How infinitely better it is to have some shame before a friend, who will cover your shame, and hate to reproach you with it, than before all the world. Convince them, what folly it is to be unfaithful to themselves, *&c.*

8. Take heed of healing the souls of sick persons slightly. This we are very apt to. 1. From the sick mans greedy desire of comfort. 2. From the expectation and desire of carnal friends. 3. From our own careless hearts, that love not to put our selves to any trouble or reproach (which we shall meet with, if we be faithful in this case) however take heed of it, *Jer.* 8. 11, *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.* This is the case: A soul (whether in sickness or in health) must first be wounded, then healed.

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There muſt be ſorrow and travel ere the Man-child be brought forth. There muſt be true repentance and godly ſorrow——deep ſorrow, (they dawb, that tell you otherwiſe, and make God a lyar) great heavineſs of heart, *&c.* Repentance is neither a ſhort, nor a ſuperficial work. ——Perſwade them to wait Gods leiſure, and in Gods way for the cure, not to precipitate your work: Perſwade them not to be afraid of ſorrows, troubles, *&c.* but rather to fear the want of it; for here is a common and a fatal miſtake, moſt men are afraid of ſorrow, and labour to drive away ſorrow: Whereas indeed ſorrow is the midwife of all true joy. Tears of penitential ſorrow, are the ſtreams that lead us to the Rivers of pleaſure, which are at Gods right hand: It is none other than the Gate of Heaven, the fountain of comfort: And on the contrary, to be a ſtranger to godly ſorrow, is one of the dreadfulleſt ſigns of a loſt ſoul. The laughter of ſuch a perſon, is a *Riſus Sardonicus*, a deadly joy. Labour more to work a ſolid, than a ſudden cure.

There are other directions I thought to have given, but theſe may ſuffice, and I will conclude all with two or three Uſes, firſt to Miniſters, then to people.

1. To Miniſters. Hence we may learn the great difficulty of the Miniſterial work: we ſee one reaſon why *Paul* ſaid, *Who is ſufficient for theſe things?* O, what a ſin and ſhame it is to ſee what perſons venture upon this work? that ſuch undertake to be ſhepherds of Chriſts Flock, that are hardly fit to be ſet with dogs of the flock? *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.* Many act, as if they thought this were all the work of a Miniſter to make a few Sermons, read ſome Prayers, *&c.* No, no, a Miniſter muſt be throughly furniſhed to every good work. He muſt be apt and able for every work: This, among others. O what Angelical abilities doth it require! Acuteneſs to diſcern the ſick mans temper, knowledg to underſtand the nature of all Spiritual Diſeaſes, the Symptoms, the Prognoſticks, as alſo the Antidotes and Remedies. Wiſdom to make ſuitable, ſpeedy Applications. O how hard a caſe it is? Many ſick men can neither endure *morbum*, nor *remedium*, neither the diſeaſe of their ſouls, nor their remedy, *&c.* A Miniſter had need know all things, underſtand all perſons, diſcern the ſubtilties of mens hearts, and not be ignorant of the wiles of the Devil.

How many knots muſt he be able ſpeedily to untye? How many caſes muſt he be able to give ſpeedy reſolution to? And he muſt be ſuppoſed to have laid up with great induſtry, becauſe he muſt bring forth out of his Treaſure, *things both new and old.* O the difficulty! It is a ſad thing to conſider, that many ſouls do periſh, not only *vi morbi*, by the force of their Diſeaſe, but alſo *errore medici*, by the error of their Phyſician, by the miſtakes of their Miniſters: And as *Galen* ſpeaks of Phyſick for the body, it is alſo true of the Phyſick of the Soul: *In medicina nihil exiguum*, In Phyſick nothing is little; a ſmall error there, may occaſion fearful miſchiefs: So a ſmall miſtake in ſoul concernments, may occaſion a ſouls everlaſting ruine.

2. To

2. To people, Is it of ſuch difficulty? O labour you to do your work in health, while time and ſtrength laſt, before the evil days come, *&c.* It is a ſerious Admonition of *Gregories*, in his Book *De cura paſtorali*, *Salus corporis quanda ad bene operandum accepta deſpicitur quanti ſit muneris amiſſa ſenitur:* He that neglects the time of health for the doing of his great work, he ſhall feel the worth of it by the want of it. I beſeech you let me reaſon with you: why will you run an hazard, when you may go a ſafe way? Conſider what woful ſtraits you will bring your ſelves to, if you do not ponder your ways, and fix your thoughts, and fix your hearts, you kill your ſouls; if you do, perhaps your bodies, *&c.* what a dreadful *Dilemma* is this, *&c.* The Phyſitian chargeth you not to trouble your ſelves with ſad thoughts, leſt you overthrow your bodies: and the Miniſter, if he will be faithful, muſt charge you to trouble your ſelves, leſt you loſe your ſouls. O conſider now; now you may conſider, you have the uſe of reaſon, then reaſon may be loſt, *&c.* Now God will accept of you, then it may be he will reject you, as *Prov.* 1. Now you are at leiſure to conſider, then *ſufficient unto the day will be the evil thereof.* And therefore be perſwaded to improve the time of health. It is the general cuſtom of ſick perſons to ſend for Miniſters to prepare them for the future life, when they deſpair of the enjoyment of this preſent life. A learned man wittily obſerved, that as they ſay, *Ubi deſinit Philoſophus, inſipit Medicus:* So it may be ſaid, *Ubi deſinit Medicus, incipit Theologus*, Where the Phyſitian ends, the Divine begins. Thus they begin to live at the end of their life: But you, if you be wiſe take this counſel (and O that my words might prevail with you), deſire to ſpeak with able and godly Miniſters in the time of your health: That, that is the acceptable time; Then may they give counſel freely, and you may follow their counſel throughly. That was the courſe of thoſe Converts, *Act.* 2. They did not tarry till their ſouls were ready to breathe out themſelves into eternity, but in the time of their health applied themſelves to *Peter*, &c. *Men and brethren, what ſhall we do?*

2. Make ſuch applications to your friends in health, as you muſt do in ſickneſs (if you mean to diſcharge your duty to God, or friendſhip to them (you will give them and your ſelves too great eaſe and advantage by it, *&c.* Remember what obligeth you to do it in ſickneſs, obligeth you alſo in health; you are your Brothers keepers, you have all, *curam animarum* cure of ſouls. And as Miniſters are bound to this work *virtute officii*, by virtue of their office, ſo yon are bound to it, *ex lege charitati:* And ſurely if every one of you are bound to deliver your neighbours Oxe or Aſs, when you ſee it falling into a pit; much more are you obliged to have compaſſion upon their ſouls, when they are going down to the pit, from which there is no redemption.

How muſt we reprove, that we may not partake of other mens Sins?

1 Tim. V. part. 22. v.

Neither be partaker of other mens ſins, keep thy ſelf pure.

THis Epiſtle is a Scripture *Directory* for Church Government. In this Chapter there are certain *general Rules*, or *Canons Apoſtolical*, which St. *Paul* enjoyns *Timothy* to obſerve;

1. About *Church-Widows*, how they muſt be *qualified*, to the 17th *ver.*

2. About *Church-Elders*, how they muſt be *ordered*, to the end.

1. *About their Maintenance and Encouragement*, v. 17, 18.
2. *About their Credit and Reputation*, v. 19.
3. *About their Reproof and Correction*, v. 20.
4. *About their Admiſſion and Ordination*, Text.

Lay *hands* ſuddenly on no man. Some underſtand this of the *hands of Abſolution*, others of the *hands of Benediction*, others of the *hands of Confirmation*, but moſt and beſt, of the *hands of Ordination*, i. e. Ordain no man, admit no man into this Sacred and weighty Office and Function of the Miniſtry, ſuddenly. *Suddenly*, i. e. not before natural *capacity*, not without competent *ability*, not unleſs qualified with *piety*, *induſtry*, *gravity*. The danger follows, *Neither be partaker of other mens ſins.* *Salmeron. Gail. Chryſ. Theoph: Theod. Calvin. Paræus Eſtius.*

1. Not of their ſins who would *importune thee to Ordain* unworthy perſons, *Conſentiendo*, *by conſenting*.

2. Not of their ſins who *do Ordain* unworthy perſons, *Imitando*, *by imitating*. *Eſtius.*

3. Not of their ſins who *are Ordained*, being unworthy perſons, and that, *Oecumenius.*

1. Not of their ſins *before* Ordination, *Approbando*, *by approving of them*. *Eſtius in loc.*

2. Not

2. Not of their ſins *after* Ordination, *Confirmando, by confirming them in them.* For, ſays the Apoſtle in the next verſe but one, *Some mens ſins are open before hand, going before to judgment, i.e.* the *Criſis*, or Teſt, or Cenſure, or Judgment of the Church: *and ſome follow after.* This is the *Grammatical ſenſe* and *Logical Analyſis* of the words.

But beloved, I muſt take leave to handle the words in a greater latitude and extent: For certainly this Caution is not intended to *Miniſters only*, neither is it to be confined to the *Caſe of Ordination*; but as Chriſt
Mat. 13. 37. ſaid upon another occaſion, *What I ſay unto you, I ſay unto all.* So here, what St. *Paul* writes to *Timothy*, he ſpeaks to all: a *private Chriſtian* as well as a *Miniſter*; a *Church-member*, as well *Church-Elder*, muſt be ſure to take heed, that he *be not partaker of other mens ſins.* The Caſe of Conſcience to be diſcuſſed this morning, is this,

Caſe.

How muſt we reprove, and not partake of other mens ſins.

Cant. 4. 2. And indeed this Caſe is complex and double, *it bears twins.*

1. About *Participation* of other mens ſins.

2. I muſt beg leave to project and manage my diſcourſe, *Sermon-wiſe*, and ſo commend to your Chriſtian meditation this Truth and Doctrine. In the *explication* whereof, I ſhall handle the *former* Caſe, and in the *application* the *latter.*

Doct. *It ought to be every mans care, not to partake of any mans ſins. Neither be partaker* ——

In the handling of which I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you,

1. *How a man may be guilty of other mens ſins, or how many ways a man may be ſaid to partake of other mens.*

2. *Why a Chriſtian muſt be careful not to partake of other mens ſins.*

3. *To apply it.*

1. *How a man may be ſaid to partake of other mens ſins:* To this I anſwer, There are *many ways* whereby we contract the guilt of others ſins: *Lord*, ſays *David*, *who knows how oft he offends?* I will name ſome of them.

There are *eight ways* eſpecially noted in Scripture, by all which a man is made *partaker*, and becomes *guilty* of the ſins of others.

1. *By Contrivance*, by plotting and contriving of ſin, by provoking and ſoliciting others to ſin; and this is in an high degree to be guilty of other mens ſins. Thus *Jonadab* was guilty of *Amnons* Inceſt by his ſubtil *contriving* of that wickedneſs, by being a Pander to that Villany, 2 *Sam.* 13. 5.

When a man ſhall wittingly and willingly ſpread a ſnare in his brothers way, and either *drive* him in by *provocation*, or *decoy* him in by *allurement*, he makes himſelf a partaker of his ſin, *E.g.* to provoke a man to Paſſion, to tempt a perſon to Drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs, to put a man upon Murder and bloodſhed, to draw ſouls into Error, Hereſie, Blaſphemy, *&c.* this is to eſpouſe and adopt the ſin, and to make it a mans own.

You know the Story there, 2 *Sam.* 11. *Uriah* was ſlain with the edg

of

of the ſword, *David* was many miles off when *Uriah* was ſlain; he died in the battel, *Joab* put him in the front, and the *Ammonites* ſlew him: but now becauſe *David* plotted and *contrived* all this, the Scripture tells us that *David* was the Murderer, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9, *Thou haſt killed Uriah the Hittite with the ſword, thou haſt ſlain him with the ſword of the children of Ammon.* Though the *blade* was the *Ammonites*, and the *hilt* might be ſaid to be *Joabs*; yet the *hand* was *Davids*, and the *deed* was *Davids*. The *Ammonites ſlew him*, but *David murdered him*. St. *Paul* tells us, he was *a blaſphemer, and a Perſecutor, and injurious*, 1 Tim. 1. 13. Why Beloved, we do not read of any blaſphemy that Saint *Paul* uttered in all the bible: Oh but, ſays he, *I compelled the Saints to blaſpheme*, Act. 26. 11. There was his blaſphemy in compelling others to blaſpheme.

Beloved, to incite and provoke any to *ſinful practices*, to ſeduce and ſolicite any to *looſe doctrines, and erroneous opinions*, it is to be doubly guilty of thoſe ſins, once by *infection*, and again by *inſtigation*.

Hence is that frequent expreſſion among the Fathers concerning *Arius* the Heretick, that look how many ſouls he had ſeduced to his hereſie and blaſphemy, ſo many ſeveral additions of torments he had in hell, as guilty of all their ſins: Oh man, who ever thou art that makeſt thy neighbour drunk, by *putting the bottle to his mouth*; that calleſt to thy brother, ſaying, *Caſt in thy lot amongſt us, and let us have one purſe*; that inticeſt the ſoul of the ſimple with a *Come, let us take our fill of loves, and ſolace our ſelves until the morning*: I tell thee, thou art guilty of all their ſins, and mayeſt juſtly be puniſhed with all their plagues: for this, *Chriſtians*, is a moſt *devilliſh* practice, to tempt and provoke others to wickedneſs. All ſins indeed are *devilliſh* ſins, *Per modum ſervitutis*; but ſome ſins are *devilliſh* ſins, *Per modum imaginis*. In all ſins men bear the *Devils yoke*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 8. but in ſome ſins, men bear the *Devils image*.

Five ſins eſpecially the Scripture brands as *devilliſh* ſins, and this is the chief, 1. *Falſe accuſation*, 2 Tim. 3. 3, *Men ſhall be falſe accuſers, Devils*, ſays the *Greek*. 2. *Lying*, Joh. 8. 44, *You are of your father the Devil, for he is a lyar, and the father of it*. 3. *Pride*, 1 Tim. 3. 6, *Not a novice, leſt puffed up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*. 4. *Perſecution*, Rev. 2. 10, *The Devil ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*, i. e. *devilliſh* men-perſecutors. 5. *Temptation*, as this is, *Get thee behind me Satan*, ſays Chriſt to *Peter*, when he tempted him, *Mat.* 16. 23. He that ſhall either *hinder* another of doing that *good* which is *commanded*, or ſhall *further* another to the doing of that *evil* which is *prohibited*, is juſtly chargeable with both their ſins.

2. By *compliance*, by conſenting and compyling with ſin and ſinners, ſo a man makes himſelf partaker: though he has no *hand in't*, yet if he has a *heart in't*, though he does not *act it*, yet if he *likes it*, and *loves it*, and *approve it*, that he does not perſecute Gods Saints and Miniſters, yet if he ſaith, *Aha, aha! ſo would we have it*, 'tis enough to make him guilty before God.

Saul, he had no hand in Saint *Stephens* death, he did not caſt one *ſtone*

at him; but becauſe he looked with approbation, and ſtood by with *conſent*, Act. 8. 1. *Saul was conſenting unto his death*, therefore was he eſteemed guilty of his blood and murder, and ſo himſelf confeſſes, when God had awakened him, and humbled him to repentance, *Act.* 22. 20, *When the blood of thy Martyr Stephen was ſhed, I was conſenting to his death*, and ſo charges himſelf as guilty of it.

God looks not upon the *outward man* ſo much as upon the *heart*; according to the *frame* and *inclination* of the heart, according as the *pulſe* of the *heart* beats, ſo is every man in the account and eſteem of God: if ſin has once ſtorm'd the *Fort-Royal* of the *heart*, though it never appears in the *Out-works*, the Gariſon is loſt: That which is upon the *ſtage* of the *heart* after *conſent*, is as truly acted in the ſight of God, as that which appears in the *outward man* by *commiſſion*, Mat. 15. 19, *Out of the heart proceeds murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſſes, blaſphemies.* Why beloved, from the *hand* proceeds *Murders*, and *Thefts*, Eph. 4. 28. from the *eye* proceeds *Adulteries* and *Fornications*, 2 Pet. 2. 14. and from the *tongue* proceeds *falſe witneſſes* and *blaſphemies*, Pſal. 120. 3. Oh but the *heart* is the *forge* of all.

You may murder a man with a *thought*, as they ſay the *Baſilisk* will with a *look*, ſuch a poyſonous thing a wicked heart is; and let me tell you, 'tis the *heart*-murder, and the *heart*-adultery, and the *heart*-blaſphemy, and the *heart*-iniquity, that God eſpecially judges, according to that famous place, *Jer.* 17. 10, *I the Lord ſearch the heart, to give to every man according to his ways*, i. e. according to what I ſee *acted* and *done* upon the *ſtage* of the *heart*, ſays God; he does not only judg the *actions*, but he judges the very *intentions*.

3. By *Connivance*, by a ſinful *diſſembling*, flattering and *winking* at others in their wickedneſs and ſins, ſo men become guilty of others ſins, *Iſa.* 9. 16, *The leaders of this people cauſe them to err*; 'tis in the *Hebrew*, The *bleſſers* of this people cauſe them to err. Beloved, the *bleſſers* of men in wickedneſs, are the *leaders* of men in wickedneſs; he that ſhall wink at, and flatter men in ſins, when he knows in his Conſcience that they do wickedly, he makes himſelf *Captain* and *Maſter* of *Miſ-rule* among them. And thus we are too prone to be partakers of *Magiſtrates ſins*, and *Governours ſins*, and *great mens ſins*, and *Patrons ſins*, and *Landlords ſins*. If the *Grandees* of the world profane the *Sabbath*, diſhonour *God*, rant and ſwear, and ſcoff at *Religion*; out of a baſe cowardly ſpirit, or out of a carnal covetous heart, we flatter them, and let them alone, it may be applaud them, as he ſaid, *Tu fac hunc dominum, te facit ille Deum*, do but make him a *Lord*, and he ſtraight-way makes thee a *God*; as if we were not to diſtinguiſh between the *perſons of men*, and the *vices of men*, or as if ſo be we more feared a *mortal man*, whoſe breath is in his noſtrils, than we do the *immortal God*, who can frown us into hell in a moment: Oh this is to be deeply guilty of other men ſins. See how ſharply God by his Prophet taxes and reproves this *dawbing* in thoſe wicked *Upholſters*, that *ſow pillows to every elbow*, Ezek. 13. 17. and ſo forward. Read it at leiſure.

מאשרי העם
Beatificantes populum

I fear

I fear this has been the ſin of former Times and Governments, God grant it may not be the ſin of preſent and future Ages, for men to connive at any that promote their own intereſts.

Alas, my Brethren, methinks the intereſt of *Piety*, and the intereſt of *Conſcience*, and the intereſt of the *eternal God*, Judg of quick and dead, ſhould ſwallow up all the intereſts of the world. If *Nebuchadnezzar* himſelf ſhould ſet up a golden Image, and would have it *worſhipped*, I tell you 'tis not *treaſon* for *Shadrach*, *Meſhech*, and *Abednego*, to ſay, *We are not careful, O King, to anſwer thee in this matter*, Dan. 3. 16.

Beſides, let not men deceive themſelves, for ſuch perſons as can ſo eaſily betray the *intereſt of God*, will never be afraid, if opportunity ſerve, to oppoſe the *ſoveraignty of man*, whoſe authority he bears, and are not indeed *Huſhai*'s, but *Ziba*'s; not *Davids friends*, but *Davids flatterers*.

4. By *ſufferance*, by permitting the ſins of others, ſo we become guilty, by *ſuffering* others to ſin, whom we are *bound in duty*, and may be *able by authority* to hinder; and thus as in the former particular, we are guilty of *Magiſtrates ſins*, in this particular Magiſtrates oft-times become guilty of *our ſins*. Kings and Rulers, and ſubordinate Magiſtrates become oft-times deeply guilty of their peoples ſins, namely, by *ſufferance*, by *tolerating* Errors, and Hereſies, and Blaſphemies on the one hand, or by *ſuffering* wickedneſs and profaneneſs on the other.

That Ruler or Magiſtrate that ſhall ſuffer either *looſe opinions* or *principles*, that are contrary to *ſound doctrine*, to be broach'd, or *looſe ways and cuſtoms*, that are contrary to the *power of godlineſs*, to be *obſerved*, and ſhall not uſe his authority to prevent and ſuppreſs them, he contracts to himſelf the *guilt*, and draws upon himſelf the *miſchief* of all thoſe ſins and Enormities: Juſt as he that licenſes a Book to the *Preſs*, if there be any faults of *ignorance*, or *error*, or *poyſonous opinions*, they may be juſtly charged upon *him* and laid at his *door*; though he is not the *Author*, yet becauſe he is the *Licenſer*; though he is not the *Parent*, yet becauſe he is the *midwife*. So if there be any *hereſie* and *blaſphemy tolerated* in a place, if there be any *profaneneſs* and *ungodlineſs ſuffered* among a people, becauſe it has the Magiſtrates *Imprimatur*, and he ſuffers it to *paſs* the Country without *whipping*, therefore he's highly guilty.

Sabbath-breaking abounds, let it paſs, ſays the *Mayor* of a Town; *drunkenneſs* abounds, let it *alone* ſays the *Juſtice* of peace; *profaneneſs* abounds, let it *go* ſays the *Miniſter*. Sirs, if it ſhould be *thus*, this were to bear the ſins of a whole *Pariſh*, and a whole *Country*, and a whole *Nation* upon a mans back at once. See that *Rev.* 2. to this purpoſe. Where you find the ſins of the people charged upon the *Governours* for their *permiſſion* and *toleration*, both ſins of *Doctrine and Practiſe*. Of *Doctrine*, Rev. 2. 12, 14, 15, *Unto the Angel of the Church of Pergamus write, I have a few things againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, ſo haſt thou alſo them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.* This is charged upon the *Angel*, the

Overseer and *Governour* of the Church, he should have hindred it, and he did tolerate and permit it, and it was his sin; and so of *Practice*, Rev. 2. 18, 20, *Unto the Angel of the Church in Thyatira, write, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezabel, which calleth her self a Propheteſs, to teach and seduce*, &c. To suffer *Jezabel* to teach in a Nation, is to suffer *painting*, and *wantonness*, and *uncleanness*: these were the sins of *Jezabel*; and to *permit* them, is to *partake* of them.

Object. 'But some may *object* and say, Why does God then *permit* sin 'to be in the *world?* he might *hinder* it, and he might *prevent* it, if he 'would; there could be no wickedness acted under the Sun, but by Gods 'permission; the *Devil* could not tempt *Job*, nor *Satan* could not sift 'Peter without leave and commission from God; neither could any man 'act his villany, and spit out his venom, without Gods *sufferance*. If 'permission of sin be a *partaking* of sin, how shall we vindicate God from 'the imputation of unrighteousness?

Answ. 1. This was *Marcion*'s wicked and malicious cavil at Gods providence about the first Transgression; Why would not God who foresaw the issue, *hinder Eve* and the *Devil* from *conference* and *communion* together, that so sin might have been prevented, and the world been everlastingly happy; unless (saith he) God was either *envious*, and *would not*; or *weak*, and *could not* hinder it? To which *Tertullian* replys, *Because God was arbitrary and free in his gifts*. *Austin* answers, *Because it was his will*. *Prosper* and *Hillary* reply, *The cause may be unknown, it cannot be unjust*. All which is enough, *os obturare*, to *muzzle* that Heaven-daring *mouth* of Blasphemy. But afterward *Austin* answers, That *though sin be the worst thing in the world, yet the existence of sin is not ill*; as poyson would do no hurt if men would not meddle with it; but that satisfies not our case. Therefore,

2. *Though God hath authority, and is of ability to prevent and hinder the Commission of sin, yet he is not bound in duty so to do.* God is under no tye and obligation, but his own purpose and pleasure. *Deus non tenetur Legibus*, God is a *Law to himself*. Herein lies the guilt and evil of mans permitting of sin, he is *bound in duty*, as well as *furnished with ability* and authority to prevent it; and therefore his permitting of sin, is a partaking of sin, *Exod.* 22. 18, *Thou shalt not suffer a Witch to live*; man is *bound* to hinder prophaneness and wickedness, if he can, but so is not God; though he is of infinite power and ability to restrain it, or to remove it, yet he is not *bound* in duty; and so it is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin. *Sin is the transgression of the Law: but where there is no Law, there is no transgression.*

3. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, when he may hinder it, *because he can by his infinite Wisdom order it to his own glory*; he suffered *Pharaoh* to harden his heart, that he might be glorified on *Pharaoh*, Rom. 9. 17, *Pharaoh*'s sin turned to *Gods glory*: as he makes all *penal evils* work together for *our good*; so he makes all *sinful evils* concur to his *own glory*.

3. It

4. It is no unrighteousness in God to suffer sin, *because he can turn every mans sin to a greater benefit and advantage*; Gen. 50. 20, *You thought evil against me*, saith *Joseph* to his Brethren, *but God meant it unto good*: He can bring good out of evil, and light out of darkness. God suffers Toads and Serpents to live, because they are useful, they suck the noxious and hurtful gusts from herbs and flowers, and so make them wholesome for mans use: So God permits sin in the world, because he knows how to make it useful; He can make an *Antidote* of the *Vipers flesh*. He did by an excellent and rare *Chymistry* extract the *greatest Mercy* from the *greatest Mischief*; the *greatest Good* from the *greatest Evil*; the *Salvation of Mankind* from the *Crucifixion of Jesus Christ*.

5. *By influence* of bad *Example*, by setting loose and bad Examples for others to imitate: So men are guilty of others sins, as namely, when Children sin by the Examples of their Parents, those very Parents are guilty of their Childrens sins. So we have some *Families* that inherit the *lusts*, as well as the *lands* of their *Ancestors*; *Parents* swear and curse, and so do *Children*; *Parents* are Drunkards, and so are *Children*; *Parents* are unclean, and so are *Children*; as they make them *rich* by their *Livings*, so they make them *wretched* and *debaucht* by their *lives*; this is to make themselves partakers of all their sins. So when *people* sin by the looseness and licentiousness of their *Minister*; that *Minister* is guilty of those very sins that the *people* so commit; which made *Austin*, though a very holy man, so exceeding jealous of himself in this case, that that was his constant prayer, *Libera me, Domine, a peccatis meis alienis*; *Lord*, saith he, *deliver me from mine other mens sins*; those sins that others have committed through my carelessness and incogitancy.

And indeed *Examples* are more cogent and influential a great deal than *precepts*. The Adulteries of *Jupiter*, and other Pagan gods, did mightily draw the people to imitate their wantonness; and *Augustine* gives the reason, *Magis intuebantur quid fecerat* Jupiter, *quàm quid docuit* Plato; They more minded what *Jupiter did*, then what *Plato taught*.

Jeroboam the son of *Nebat* is said to make *Israel* to sin, that's his brand. How did he *make Israel* to sin? why, by his *Law* he *commanded* them to sin, but by his practice and *Example* he *made* them to sin; He set up *Calves* in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and whole *herds* of people ran a *lowing* after them. So it is said of Saint *Peter*, that he *compelled* the Gentiles to *Judaize*, Gal. 2. 14, *Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?* How did Saint *Peter* compel the Gentiles to *Judaize*? Not by any thing he *preacht* to them, saith *Hierome*, but by his *Example*, *Non docentis imperio, sed conversantis exemplo*. A stone you know thrown into the water, makes it self but *one* circle; ay but that one perhaps begets a *score*, or an *hundred*: So it is here, he that sets an evil Example, sins not alone, he draws *hundreds* it may be into sin after him. He is like a man that sets his own house on fire, it burns many of his neighbours, and he is to be answerable for all the ruins.

Epistola Hieronymi intra opera Augustini Epist. 11.

6. *By inference* from a bad Example, or by *imitation*, so a man is guilty of another mans sin; not only by *pattern*, in *setting* bad Examples, but also

also by *practise*, in following bad Examples; and thus, that man that will be drunk, because another was drunk, or that breaks the Sabbath, because others do the like, he is not only guilty of his own particular sin, but he is guilty also of their sins whom he imitates and follows; and the reason is, *because bad* Examples *are not Land-marks for us to go by, but they are Sea-marks for us to avoid.* Hence you shall find in Scripture mention made of *Children by imitation* as well as by *nature*, and *people* by *imitation*, as well as by *nation*, and *Kings by imitation*, as well as by *succession*. I'le give you an *instance* of all these. Look into that *Judges* 18. 30, *The children of Dan set up the graven image, and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were Priests to the Tribe of Dan.* Here *Jonathan* an *Idol-Priest*, is called the son of *Gershom*, the son of *Manasseh*, *i.e.* the Grand-child of *Manasseh*. Now it is clear in Scripture, that *Gershom* was the son of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseh*, Exod. 2. 22. & 18. 3. 1 *Chron.* 23. 15. And so *Jonathan* must be the Grand-child of *Moses*, and not of *Manasseh*. But the *Jews* and learned *Criticks* tell us, that he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseh* for a double reason. 1. Because the Scripture consulting the honour of *Moses*, did conceal his pedigree as to *Moses*, for it had been a disgrace to *Moses*, to have had upon record an *Idol-Priest* in his lineage; and 2. Which is to my purpose, he is called the Grand-child of *Manasseh*, and that by μετάληψις, and *anticipation*, because he followed him in his *Idolatry*, he was no whit like *Moses*, but rather imitated *Manasseh*, and so he is called his Grand-child.

For the other instance, see *Isa.* 1. 10. *Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodom, and give ear unto the Law of our God ye people of Gomorrah.* Why beloved, these that the Prophet speaks to, they were the people of *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem*. Why does the Prophet call them the people of *Gomorrah?* even for this reason, they did *imitate* those filthy *Sodomites* and *Gomorrhites* in wickedness and wantonness, and looseness, and so became *guilty* of their *sins*, and *worthy* of their *names*.

The last instance you have in 2 *Chron.* 28. 19, *The Lord brought Judah low, because of Ahaz King of Israel. Ahaz*, all know, was King of *Judah*, and not King of *Israel*; but he is called King of *Israel*, because he *imitated* the wicked and Idolatrous Kings of *Israel*; he was not so by *succession*, but he was so by *imitation*.

Hence it is that God is said to *visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, because they make themselves guilty by *imitation*; and this may be a Key to unlock that place of the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 3. 13, *Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Deceivers are worse*, but the *Deceived* are *worse and worse*; if they see a bad Example, and will not avoid it, but copy it, they are worse than worse. *The Deceiver* is guilty of the *deceived's sin* by *instigation*, and the *deceived* is guilty of the *deceivers sin* by *imitation*.

And this is the woful, intricate, perplexed *Labyrinth*, into which sin doth precipitate careless and ungodly Sinners. If thou committest that sin which none *before* committed *but thee*, thou art guilty of all the sins of *future Generations* by thy *Example*, as *Adam* was in the *World*, and *Jeroboam*

boam in *Iſrael*. And if thou committeſt any Sin, becauſe *others* have committed it *before thee*, thou art guilty of all the ſins of *former Generations*, by thy *imitation*, and ſo Sin never goes alone; a *ſingle ſin* is as great a *ſolœciſm* in *Divinity*, as a *ſingle thank* is in *Grammar* and *Morality*; and that you may know *Chriſtians*, I do not ſpeak *without Book* in ſo ſaying, witneſs that dreadful place, *Mat.* 23. 34, 35, 36, *Wherefore behold I ſend unto you Prophets, and wiſe men, and Scribes, and ſome of them ye ſhall kill and crucifie, and ſome of them ye ſhall ſcourge in your Synagogues, and perſecute from City to City.* Mark, *that upon you may come all the righteous blood ſhed upon the Earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias the Son of Barachias, whom ye ſlew*, though ſlain in *Jehoaſh* reign, almoſt *nine hundred* years before, yet *ye ſlew between the Temple and the Altar. Verily I ſay unto you, all theſe things ſhall come upon this Generation.* And why? Becauſe they ſinned *after the ſimilitude of their Fathers tranſgreſſion.* Oh what matter of humiliation is this to every ſoul that continues in any known ſin.

7. *By countenance*; by delightful ſociety and *company* with wicked men to *countenance* them, ſo we become partakers of their ſins, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. compared with 13, *But now I have written to you not to keep company. If any man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with ſuch a one no not to eat; Therefore put away from among your ſelves that wicked perſon.* As you would *avoid* the *ſin*, *avoid* the *ſinner*: *Eating* does denote *intimate* fellowſhip and familiarity; and we cannot be *intimate* with ſuch without contracting their guilt to our own ſouls. 'Tis true indeed, *all commerce* with ſuch is not forbidden; for then, as the Apoſtle ſays, *we muſt go out of the world*, verſ. 10. But *intimate* ſociety is, upon this account. And therefore the *Apoſtle*, or at leaſt the *Tranſlator* does here ſeem *Critically* to diſtinguiſh between *companying*, and *keeping company*, verſe 9. compared with 11, *I wrote to you in an Epiſtle not to company with Fornicators; but now I write to you not to keep company*; *Company* we may, yea, we cannot avoid it, but keep *company* we muſt not with wicked men. As elſewhere the Holy Ghoſt diſtinguiſhes between *ſinning*, and *committing ſin*; *He that is born of God doth not commit ſin*, ſaith Saint *John*. The holieſt man on this ſide Heaven cannot but *ſin*, ſaith the ſame *Apoſtle*, ay but *he that is born of God does not commit ſin*; *ſin* he does, but *commit ſin* he doth not; *i.e.* he doth not delight in it, he doth not make it his practice. *So here.*

We read in Scripture where wicked men have often fared better for the godly, as *Laban* for *Jacob*, and *Potiphar* for *Joſeph*, and *Ahab* for *Jehoſhaphat*, &c. but we never read that godly men fared better for the company of the wicked, but rather worſe, *Pſal.* 119. 115, *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*; it is a very hard matter *to keep wicked company*, and *to keep the Commandments of God* together.

The *Lacedemonians* would never ſuffer a ſtranger to be with them above three days, for fear of *infection* and corruption with their evil manners,

ners. And verily those that are strangers to God and godliness, should be as little as may be our companions.

8. By *Maintenance*, by upholding and encouraging men in their sins; though thou never committest them thy self, yet thou art guilty, 2 *Joh.* 11, *He that biddeth him God-speed, is partaker of his evil Deeds.* Though thou doest not *commit it*, yet if thou doest *applaud it*, and *rejoyce in it*, and say it is well done, thou art a partner; if thou art not the *Mother of it*, yet thou art the *Nurse of it*; if thou art not the *Father of it*, yet thou art the *Guardian of it*, and God will lay the *brat* at thy door, as sure as if thou hadst *begot* it.

Thus I have done with the first thing, *how we become guilty, or how many ways partakers of other mens sins*: There are many more might be named, as *by hindring good, by excusing evil, by administring occasion, by not reproving, not mourning, nor reclaiming*, &c. But these and many more, that practical Authors handle, they are but *underling-sprigs* from the great branches that I have opened.

2. *Why a Christian must be careful to avoid, and not to partake of other mens sins?* The *reasons* of the *Doctrine.*

Answ. Out of a *Three-fold* principle.

1. Out of a principle of *Charity* to our *Brethren.*

2. Out of a principle of *Pity* to our *selves.*

3. Out of a principle of *Piety* to *God.*

1. *Out of charity to our Brethren*, that we be not means and instruments to promote their ruin and destruction: For, to partake of other mens sins, though it does more *burthen us*, yet it does never a whit *ease them*, but does rather *harden them*, and confirm them in their practises; for company in sin makes men act it with the greater confidence. Now this is to do the *Devils* part in the habit of a *friend.* Sirs, we must be charitable, *Charity* is the Golden Rule, *Charity* is the bond of perfection; now if it be a piece of Charity to help up our Brothers *Oxe* or *Ass*, when he is fallen into a Ditch, *Exod.* 23. 4. Sure 'tis more Charity to do as much for his *soul*, *Jude* 23, *Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* Sin is the deep Ditch of the Soul, and sin is the Hell-*fire* of the soul, as it were; here should be lifting and plucking indeed.

The neglect of this duty of keeping one another from sin, the Scripture calls an *hating of our Brother*, Lev. 19. 17, *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart, Thou shalt not suffer sin upon him.* I observe in company, that if many persons sit together by a fire, and a Spark flye upon any one of them, every one is ready to shake it off, and beat it off; and why should not we be as friendly and charitable to mens souls, when sin, which is as Hell-flakes, lies *smothering* in their *Consciences*, or *burning* upon their *Souls.*

2. *Out of pity to our selves*, that we may keep our selves from the *blood* of other mens *souls*, and secure our selves from the *judgments* of other mens *sins:* For the former, says Saint *Paul*, Act. 20. 26, 27, *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not*

shunned

ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God: Had the Apoſtle *connived at, or conſented* to their ſins, God would have made inquiſition for the blood of their ſouls at his hands. For the latter, ſays *Jacob*, Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7, *Simeon and Levi are Brethren, inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Oh my ſoul, come not into their ſecrets; unto their aſſembly, mine honour, be not thou united.* Why? Oh, *I will divide them in Jacob, and ſcatter them in Iſrael.* He would not have a hand in their *ſinful union*, becauſe he would not have a *ſhare* in their *dreadful diviſion*; they were *united in ſin*, and they muſt be *divided in puniſhment.*

3. *Out of pity towards God*; God forbids it, *Epheſ.* 5. 7. Be not partakers with them, and God forbid that we ſhould do it! Nay, God abhors it and condemns it, *Pſal.* 50. 18, 21, *When thou ſaweſt a Thief, thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been partaker with the Adulterers*, &c. *Theſe things haſt thou done, but I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thee.* This ſin is a breach of all the Law at once, being againſt the rule of Charity. He that hath his own ſins alone, doth only *commit* them; but he that takes *other mens ſins*, doth highly *approve* them; and this greatly diſhonours God; it is worſe *partaking* of ſin, than *committing* of ſin, *Rom.* 1. 32, *They do not only do the ſame*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *but have pleaſure in them that do them*, that's worſe. Wherefore *Zelophehads* Daughters pleaded in mitigation of their Fathers offence, that *he died in his own ſin*, he was not partner with *Korah, but died in his own ſin:* It is worſe to be a *partner*, than to be an *Actor*, Numb. 27. 3.

3. *Application.*

1. *Information:* Is there ſuch a thing, as *partaking of other mens ſins*, after this manner?

1. *Hence you may be informed of the Equity and Juſtice of Gods proceeding in puniſhment*: You oft-times ſee God puniſhing one mans ſin upon another, or at leaſt hear of it, and you think it ſtrange: why this *Oedipus* will read the Riddle. This *Clue* will conduct you through the *labyrnth.* They have been ſome way or other *partakers* of thoſe ſins, either by *contrivance*, or by *compliance*, or by *connivance*, &c. one way or other, elſe God would never puniſh them; if they have not been *Actors*, they have been *Abettors: Shall not the Judg of all the world do right?* God puniſhes *Children* for the ſins of their *Parents*, Exod. 34. 7. Aye but thoſe *Children* have been κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* certainly, by *approbation*, it may be by *imitation:* God puniſhes *ſervants* for the ſins of their *maſters*, Gen. 12. 17. But ſure the *ſervants* were κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* by *conſenting*, it may be by *executing:* God puniſhes *Wives* for the ſins of their *Huſbands*, Gen. 20. 18. but thoſe *Wives* were κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* ſtill by *admitting*, by *induring:* God puniſhes *Miniſters* for the ſins of the *people*, Ezek. 33. 8. But then thoſe *Miniſters* are κοινωνοὶ, *partakers* ſure enough, by *not inſtructing*, by *not reproving*; ſtill the Juſtice of God is vindicated.

2. Hence be informed *what piety, and ſtrictneſs, and watchfulneſs, is*

more eſpecially required of thoſe that have the care of others, e. g. Kings, and Parents, and Maſters, and Magiſtrates, and Miniſters, they ſhould be *exemplary in godlineſs*: They have *curam animarum*, and therefore they ſhould have *curam animæ*; they have care of *other mens* ſouls, and therefore they ſhould look well to their *own*. The want of this was her *crime* and *complaint*, Cant. 1. 6, *They made me the Keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept.* Oh thoſe that are Keepers of Vineyards, had need to have ſpecial care of their own Vineyard.

3. Hence take an account *why the wicked of the world do ſo hate the godly, and reproach and revile them*; it is this, They will not be *partakers of their ſins*, they will not *commit them*, neither will they *connive at them*; and this is the reaſon why the world hates them: *Ahab* hates *Michajah*, and himſelf gives the reaſon, becauſe he *reproved him*, 1 King. 22. 8, *I hate him, he never ſpeaks well of me. Herod* hates *John Baptiſt*, becauſe he *reproves him*. No wonder that *Miniſters* of all kind of men in the world are moſt *hated*; the caſe is plain, becauſe they are *reprovers*. *Godly Miniſters* are wicked mens *reprovers*, and *wicked men* are godly Miniſters *reproachers*, 1 Pet. 4. 4, *They think it ſtrange you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot, ſpeaking evil of you.*

4. Here is *matter of reproof and humiliation this day for our want of watchfulneſs in this kind.* Oh which of us can ſay, that we are free from the guilt of other mens ſins. Every man may caſt this *bur* of *reproof* and *lamentation* at his own Conſcience, and there let it ſtick. *Parents* every one, *children ah my ſins*; *Maſters, ah my ſervants ſins*; *Miniſters, ah my peoples ſins*; *Rulers, ah my ſubjects ſins.* Oh let us deeply mourn for want of *relative holineſs*, and more frequently and fervently pray that prayer, *Lord forgive me my other mens ſins.*

2. The *ſecond Uſe* is of *Exhortation* and *Caution* together. Is it ſo, That it ought to be *every mans care*, not to partake of any *mans ſin?*

Oh Chriſtians! let me intreat you then to be very mindful of this Duty; be perſwaded, beloved, and the Lord perſwade you to be tenderly careful and watchful, *that you do not partake of other mens ſins.* Theſe are infectious times and places that we live in, and multitudes there are that catch diſeaſes and diſtempers from others; but let me tell you Chriſtians, that *bodily diſeaſes* are not half ſo catching as *ſin* is; ſin is an infectious, contagious, peſtilential plague, that ſpreads mightily in the World: Oh take heed, take heed that the guilt of other mens ſins do not one day lie upon your Conſcience, and be put upon your account.

Let me inforce this counſel in the words of our Apoſtle here, and they are very weighty and *Emphatical.*

Verſe 21, *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the Elect Angels, that thou obſerveſt theſe things, without preferring one before another*; and amongſt the reſt this is one, *That thou be not partaker of other mens ſins.* Give me leave to proſecute this in theſe three particulars.

1. *By laying down ſome Arguments to preſs this Caution and Exhortation.*

2. *By*

2. *By pointing at what ſins eſpecially you muſt not partake of.*

3. *By ſhewing you how you may ſo manage the buſineſs, and order the matter, as not to be partakers of other mens ſins.* What are the *Antidotes* againſt this *infection.*

1. To lay down the *Arguments.*

1. Conſider, *you have ſins enough of your own,* you have no reaſon to partake of other mens; it is cruel to *add affliction to your bonds. Jeſus Chriſt* had no ſins of his own, and therefore he could, and did bear ours; he did take all mens ſins, though he did not *partake* of any mans ſins, all were his by *imputation,* Iſa. 53. 6, *He hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all,* but none were his by *perpetration* and *participation.* It is not ſo with us: alas! We have ſins enough of our own; Man, Woman, thine own *pride* will damn thee, if thou doſt not repent; and thine own *hypocroſie,* and *formality,* and *worldlineſs,* and *hardneſs* of heart; thou haſt no need to take the ſins of others; ſaid the Daughter of *Zelophehad,* our *Father died in his own ſin,* Numb. 27. 3. ay, that is enough to *kill* a man, and *damn* a man, *his own ſin.*

2. Conſider, *It is a moſt monſtrous ſin, it is a moſt dreadful ſin to partake of other mens ſins.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks of *committing iniquity with greedineſs,* Epheſ. 4. 19. Sirs, there is no ſuch greedy ſinning as this, for a man to lick up, and ſwallow down, and devour other mens ſins. *Naturaliſts* tell us, that *Serpens Serpentem devorans fit Draco,* If a Serpent ſwallow down another Serpent, it becomes a Dragon. Oh *Chriſtians!* this ſin of devouring other mens ſins, is a *Dragon-ſin,* a *Monſtrous ſin,* a *Dreadful ſin,* a *Deviliſh ſin,* and therefore take heed of it.

3. Conſider, *If you partake of other mens ſins, you ſhall certainly partake of other mens plagues,* Rev. 18. 4. *Come out of her my people,* ſays God, namely, from *Babylon, that you be not partakers of her ſins, that ſo ye receive not of her plagues.* See Prov. 13. 20, *A companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed;* not only *fools* ſhall be deſtroyed, but a *companion* of fools ſhall be deſtroyed; If you *ſin* with them, you ſhall *ſuffer* with them, and you ſhall *ſuffer more* becauſe of them. Read that, *Luk.* 16. 27, 28, *And the rich man ſaid, I pray thee Father Abraham, that thou wouldeſt ſend Lazarus to my Fathers houſe, for I have five Brethren, that he may teſtifie unto them, leſt they alſo come into this place of Torment.* Why would not he have his Brethren to come to hell to him? Divines determine, not out of any *love to their ſouls,* there is not that charity to be ſuppoſed in hell. Oh, but becauſe the ſight of them, *and company of them, would increaſe his Torment.* This will be the ſchreeking and howling in hell among damned ſouls one to another; oh woe-worth *the* day that ever I ſaw *thy* face! oh that ever I ſaw *thy* face! thou haſt brought *me* hither, and thou haſt brought *me* hither; and ſo they will torment one another to all eternity.

Loquitur Apoſtulus de peccatis gravioribus iiſq; maxime quæ publicum offendiculum pariunt. Eſtius in loc.

2. *What ſins we muſt eſpecially take heed of partaking of?*

Anſw. *Of all ſin whatſoever,* 1 Theſ. 5. 22, *Abſtain from all appearance of evil;* but eſpecially of *three ſorts of ſins,* which may be called *Epidemical* Plagues.

1. Church-ſins. 2. National-ſins. 3. Family-ſins. But I ſhall ſpeak nothing of the firſt, but little of the ſecond, and moſt to the third.

Among National ſins, *eſpecially* take heed of *Prophaneſs*; this is obvious, this is an univerſal ſpreading-plague, that is like to infect the whole Kingdom, if God does not in mercy prevent it. There is a deluge of profaneneſs breaking in on every ſide, Swearing, Drinking, Whoring, Sabbath-breaking, Scoffing and Mocking at Religion, all the Countries ring again. Men are now grown bold, and audacious, and incorrigible in their wickedneſs, that like a *Titan brood* they even threaten Heaven it ſelf with an over-daring impudence, as if they would ſtorm the Palace of *Jehovah*, and pluck him out of his Throne. Oh take heed of partaking here!

2. *Family-ſins*, we muſt have a care of partaking here, and ſo much the more watchful muſt we be, in that Family-ſins of all ſins are moſt catching and infectious; As it is with bodily diſeaſes, if one be ſick in an houſe, they of the blood, and kin, and family, are likeſt to catch the diſtemper, becauſe of their frequent and intimite converſe eſpecially: So it is here, if there be any predominant luſt lurking in a Family, all are apt to be infected with it, if they are not marvellous circumſpect and watchful.

And therefore Parents, and Maſters, and Governours of Families, had need to be reformers both of themſelves, ann all under their charge; for beſides, that this is the moſt compendious and ſafeſt way to State-Reformation, and Church Reformation. Every Family being a kind of a little Kingdom of it ſelf, and a little Church of it ſelf, wherein the Maſter is both King, Prieſt, and Prophet; beſides this, there is the ſound of this Argument, and reaſon to allarm them (*viz*) as they deſire to have their ſouls and conſciences free from the guilt of other mens ſins.

Plato ſeeing a child do miſchief in the ſtreets, went forthwith and corrected his Father for it; the Father that does not correct his child when he does amiſs, is juſtly corrected for his faults; and it is the pattern of Gods judicial proceedings, as he viſits the iniquities of the Fathers upon the Children, who *imitate them:* So he viſits the iniquities of the Children upon the Fathers, who *countenance and indulge them.* A *Jacob* was countable to *Laban* for the whole flock, not a Sheep or a Lamb loſt or torn, but it was required at his hands, *Gen.* 31. 39. Thus muſt Family-Governours be accountable to God for every Lamb in the fold, for every child in the Family, for every ſervant in the houſe, *Luk.* 16. 2. Says God to him, *Give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, thou mayeſt be no longer Steward:* So will God one day cry aloud in thine ears, *Quintili vare, redde legiones*, Husband, Father, Maſter, Wife, give an account of thy Husbandſhip, and give an account of thy Fatherſhip, give an account of thy Maſterſhip, give an account of thy Wifeſhip, *&c.* This made *Joſhuah* undertake for his *houſe*, as well as for *himſelf*, Joſh. 24. 15. And this made *David* careful of his *houſe*, as well as his *heart*, Pſal. 101. 2, *I will walk within mine houſe with a perfect heart*; not only with a perfect heart, but in his houſe with

with a perfect heart, ſo as to reform his *family*, that that may be the *Church of God*, Col. 4. 15. as well as to reform himſelf, that he may be the *Temple of God*, 1 Cor. 3. 17. Philem. 2. Cor. 4. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 19.

Ah how many Families are there, whoſe houſes are not the *Church of God*, but the *Synagogue of Satan* rather; God is not in all their thoughts, nor God is not in all their mouths, except it be in ſwearing, and curſing, and blaſpheming. Their *Bellies are their god*, and their luſt their Lord. It is ſaid of *Noahs Ark*, that it was pitcht within and without, *Gen.* 6. 14. Such (ſays one) is the condition of many a mans houſe, it is a *Noahs Ark*, it is pitcht within and without, nothing but the pollutions and defilements of ſin in every room, and paſſage, and corner. *Idleneſs* ſtands at the door; *Unconſcionableneſs* walks in the ſhop; *Covetouſneſs* lurks in the counting-houſe; *Luxury* ſits at the Table; *Pride* looks out at the window; *Wantonneſs* lodges in the bed; all pitchy and filthy both within and without.

And therefore Chriſtians, for the Lords ſake, *out* with all this rubbiſh, if it ſhould be found in your Families; How do you in *London* here delight to have your houſes clean, and hereupon ſweep them, and waſh them, and rub them; oh that you would be as careful to cleanſe your *Families* from ſin, as you are to cleanſe your *houſes* from *dirt*; how ſoon would this great City become *an Habitation of Righteouſneſs, and a Mountain of Holineſs?* how would this Family-Reformation prevent the guilt of Family-ſins, and keep out Family-diſtractions, and ſecure from Family-deſolation. Therefore, Sirs, ſet up Family-watchfulneſs, and Family-correction; let every houſe be an houſe of correction of it ſelf; and ſet about Family reading, and Family-conference, and Family-repetition, and eſpecially Family-prayer: That all your houſes may be like Gods houſe; you know his is called *an houſe of Prayer*, Iſa. 56. 7, *Mine houſe ſhall be called an houſe of prayer for all people:* So ſhould yours, they ſhould be houſes of prayer all of them; if they be not, let me tell you, they are no better than Dens of Thieves. Saith Chriſt, *Mat.* 21. 13, *My houſe ſhall be called an houſe of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.* There is no *Medium* betwixt theſe two; if you houſes be not *houſes of Prayer*, they are certainly *dens of Thieves*; if you do not *pray* to God for your mercies, before your receive them, and *praiſe* God for your mercies when you enjoy them, you do but *rob* God of his mercies; they are not *given*, but *thrown*, and *ſnatcht* indeed, rather than *received.*

3. Now, and in the laſt place, we come to the *Antidotes*, *How we muſt ſo carry it, and order the buſineſs, as not to partake of other mens ſins.*

Antidote 1. *Exerciſe an holy jealouſie over others* (I am jealous over you, ſaith *Paul*) eſpecially thy Relations; and this is the way to deliver thy ſoul from their ſins. *Job* ſacrificing for his Children, ſaid, *It may be* they may have ſin, *Job* 1. 5.

Antidote 2. *Watch againſt the ſins of others*, have your eyes about you: take heed of contriving, complying, winking at them; if it be in your power, take heed of ſuffering them. See *Davids* paroxiſm of zeal in this caſe, *Pſal.* 101. 2, &c.

This

This is the direction in the Text, which must not be omitted; Keep thy self pure, take heed of infectious places, and infectious practices, and infectious company.

Antid. 3. *Pray against them*, pray against profaneness, pray *Augustines* prayer, *Lord deliver me from other mens sins.*

Antid. 4. *Mourn for them*; mourn for the sins of the Nation, and mourn for the sins of thy Relations: for the sins of thy Brethren in their obstinacy, that they will not be reformed: Christ came to sinful *Jerusalem* with weeping eys, and with a mourning heart, Oh *Jerusalem*! *David* mourned for the wickedness of the times that he saw, *Psal.* 119. 136. *Many walk, says Paul, of whom I tell you weeping.* Thus did Gods people of old free themselves from National sins, and particular mens sins. When they could not be reformers, they turned mourners, *Jer.* 13. 17. And see how prevalent this is with God, these mourners are the only people to deliver a Nation, or at least to deliver themselves from the sin and plagues of a Nation, when God makes an overflowing-scourge to pass through, *Ezek.* 9. 4. On the other side, not mourning for the sins of others, makes us adopt, and espouse the sins of others. *Dan.* 5. 22.

Antid. 5. *Reprove them*, Ezek. 3. 17, 18, 19. If we would not partake of the sins of others, we must reprove the sins of others, *Lev.* 19. Ezek. 33. 7, 8, 9. So the Apostle saith expressly, *Ephes.* 5. 11, intimating that you do certainly approve them, if you do not reprove them. Reprove Heresie, Blasphemy, Drunkenness, Oaths, Sabbath-breaking, Uncleanness, and every sin you hear or see committed. The Ravisht Virgin under the Law, *Deut.* 22. 25, was to cry out; in this case God takes silence for consent. As there is a holy silence to Gods Correction, *Aaron* held his peace; so there is a sinful silence under mans corruption, *Eli* held his peace also; *Aarons* silence was a good silence, but *Eli*'s silence was a naughty silence; we must be silent under Gods correction, but we must not be silent under mans corruption, *Lev.* 5. 1. Therefore saith Saint *Paul*, Reprove them; the best way to avoid fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, and to free a mans soul from the guilt of others mens sins, is to reprove them, that is the Antidote against this infection. Thus the *Ephesians* practised as Saint *Paul* preacht. Saint *Paul* does not more advise them to this duty, than Saint *John* does commend them for this duty. Says the holy Ghost there in *Apoc.* 2. 1, 2, 3. compared together——hast born, and yet hast not born——Gods Correction——mans corruption. I know thy patience, and how thou canst not——it is no breach of patience to be impatient against sin, and sinners. But now beloved, because this sword of Reproof is a very dangerous weapon, if it be not rightly handled, an edg-tool that we must be marvellously chary how we meddle with: There is required therefore a great deal of skill, and prudence, and wisdom, and watchfulness, to a right and successful managing of this duty, *Eccl.* 12. 11. He that would fasten this nail of Reproof, in the conscience of his offending Brother, had need be a very wise man. Yea, as I remember, *Isiod. Pelus.* τὸ μὲν ἐπιτιμᾶν ῥᾴδιον. Every one can find fault, and reprove another for the same,

ſame, but to do it diſcreetly, and ſeaſonably, and ſucceſsfully, requires a great deal of wiſdom; and to this end I ſhall give you theſe Rules. Reproof is double.

1. Miniſterial, and by way of Authority: and Fraternal, by way of Charity.

And here we come to the ſecond caſe, vix. *Reproof*, 1. *He that reproves another, muſt be very careful that himſelf be faultleſs and blameleſs, as much as may be*; otherwiſe he is not acting his Charity, but bewraying his Hypocriſie. *Thou that teacheſt another*——*Rom.* 2. 11, 22.. This is Hypocriſie, ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.* 7. 3, 4, 5.——And here there are two things coucht in this,

1. *A man muſt be faultleſs in referenee to ſin in general, as much as may be, that will reprove another.* The ſnuffers of the Sanctuary under the Law, were of pure gold, and it behoves that man, that will be a ſnuffer in Gods houſe, to correct others, to amend others, and reprove others; to be very upright and circumſpect in all things, and then he may admoniſh with the greater Advantage, Authority, Efficacy. Let the *Righteous* ſmite me, ſaith *David, &c.* Pſal. 141. 5. A man of a ſtrict and ſevere life, and religious and righteous converſation, carries a kind of a Majeſty and Authority along with him, at which the guilty conſcience of guilty ſinners cannot but recoil, as *Herod* did to *John Baptiſt*, Mat. 6. 20. ——Though *John* had reproved him, and touched him to the quick, *v.* 18. And then

2. *A man muſt be blameleſs in reference to that ſin he reproves eſpecially*; elſe, in healing his Brother, he doth but ſtab himſelf; if thou reproveſt *Pride* in others, and art proud thy ſelf; *Covetouſneſs*, and art covetous thy ſelf; *Drunkenneſs*, and art a drunkard thy ſelf; thou doſt but like *David* in *Nathans* Parable, pronounce the ſentence of thine own condemnation, *Rom.* 2. 1. But here I muſt enter one Caution, None is exempted from this duty for unfitneſs, no: this thou oughteſt to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

2. ——*As he muſt take heed that himſelf be faultleſs, ſo he muſt be ſure that his Brother be faulty*; For otherwiſe it is not to reprove him, but to reproach him; and ſo inſtead of doing a Chriſtian duty, a man commits a devilliſh ſin; he becomes an accuſer of the Brethren, inſtead of a Reprover of the Brethren, *Gal.* 2. 11. And here are likewiſe two things conſiderable,

1. It muſt be a truth that thou reproveſt him for.

2. It muſt be a ſin that thou reproveſt him for.

1. It muſt not be a conjecture, or imagination, or jealouſie, or rumour, or hear-ſay that's ground ſufficient for Reproof: for all theſe may be falſe, and the Rule of Charity is, *quiſque præſumitur eſſe bonus niſi conſtat de malo*——But verily the guiſe of the world is far otherwiſe; we deal with our Brethren as the perſecuting Pagans did with the Primitive Chriſtians, put them into Lions-skins, and into Bears-skins, and then bait them, and tear them to pieces. Alas! the poor Chriſtians were harmleſs meek Lambs, but they diſguiſed them, and ſo abuſed them. Thus

'tis

'tis now, Chriſtians are apt and ready to put their poor Brethren into I know not what kind of monſtrous ugly ſhapes, of their own imagining, and deviſing, or elſe of other mens traducing and reporting, and without more ado, they fall foul upon them: This is not to imitate our Saviour, *Iſa.* 11. 2, 3, 4. ——Not from rumors——— but with righteouſneſs and equity; as God ſaid in deſtroying of *Sodom*, ſo ſhould we ſay in reproving our Brethren, *Gen.* 18. 21, *I will go down and ſee.*

2. It muſt be a breach of ſome command Affirmative or Negative, directly, or reductively; either the omiſſion of that which is good, or the commiſſion of that which is evil;——— we muſt be *Cato*'s——not *Momus*'s.——As the Phariſees to Chriſt, *Mat.* 19. 3, So here, Is it lawful to reprove a man for every cauſe? No, the Diſciples were quite out in reproving the children for coming to Chriſt in this Chapter, when it was not their ſin, but their duty, *verſe* 13, 14. Quakers make a ſtir about Cuffs, and Bands, and Ribbons, and Laces, and ſuch like minute trifles of Phariſaical humility; if they can prove theſe ſins, let them reprove them in Gods name; but if they are indifferent things, it is cenſoriouſneſs, uncharitableneſs, and pragmaticalneſs to rail at them, and not Chriſtian Reproof.

3.———*He muſt manage his Reproof to ſincere ends*; muſt take heed that his aims and intentions be upright and honeſt in reproving. Take heed of mingling any wild-fire of pride, and vain-glory, and ambitious humour of contradicting and controuling others, with thy zeal of reproving: This heat muſt be holy heat, a fire of the Sanctuary as free from the ſmoak of by-ends, and ſelf-intereſt, as may be, purely for Gods glory, and out of hatred unto ſin, and out of love to the ſalvation of thy Brothers ſoul. *Diogenes* (it is ſtoried) reproved *Plato*'s pride, by trampling upon his Velvet Chair and Cuſhion, but ſays the Author, *Majori faſtu ſuperbum Platonem Diogenes ſuperbior.*

4. *He muſt manage his Reproof in fit ſeaſon:* There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to be ſilent: Reproof is a duty grounded upon an Affirmative Precept. Now 'tis well obſerved by Divines, that Affirmative Precepts bind *ſemper*, but not *ad ſemper*; we muſt always reprove, but we muſt not reprove always; it is a conſtant duty, but it muſt be done in a ſeaſonable opportunity. There are certain *mollia fandi Tempora*, words upon the wheels, as *Solomon* calls them, that are like Apples of Gold; and let me tell you Chriſtians, one word ſpoken in ſeaſon, is worth a thouſand other words. Now it is impoſſible to define and determine all the nicks of time wherein a man ſhould ſtrike in with a Reproof; for this muſt be left to the wiſdom and experience of every Chriſtian, that makes it his buſineſs to be his Brothers keeper; and let him aſſure himſelf, he muſt expect to loſe many an admonition, ſhoot many an Arrow of Reproof, as *Jonathan* did his, under and over, on this ſide and t'other ſide, before he hit the mark.

Rules.

1. *He muſt take a ſeaſon wherein the offender is capable of Reproof.* If a man be drunk, we muſt ſtay till he be ſober; as *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25. 36, 37.

36, 37.——So if a man be all in a heat of paſſion, we muſt ſtay, and come to him, as God did to *Adam*, in the cool of the day, when the fit was over.

2. *We muſt take a ſeaſon wherein we have occaſion to commend a man for his virtues*, and then rub him up for his faults, Sir you are thus and thus; Oh but if you would but mend this and that, how excellent it would be! So St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 11. 2, 17.

3. *We muſt do it as ſoon as ever we can*, and the ſooner the better; a green wound is eaſier healed than an old ſore, *Lev.* 19. 17.

4. *If we have long waited* for fit ſeaſons, and yet cannot find them, you had better make a breach upon ones prudence, than ones conſcience; diſcretion then muſt give place to neceſſity, out with it, and leave the ſucceſs to God.

5. *He muſt manage his Reproof with due conditions and qualification.* And beloved there are ſeven properties of that Reproof that will in all likelihood both benefit and better our Brother, and alſo ſecure our ſelves from participation of his ſins.

1. *We muſt reprove ſeriouſly and in good earneſt*, ſo as to knock the nail up to the head in the conſcience of the ſinner, *Pſal.* 50. 21.—So ſhould we in our Reproof of our Brother, charge him home, Theſe things had thou done, there is no denying; thou art the man, ſays *Nathan* to *David*: before he was in his parable, but now he ſpeaks plain Engliſh, as we ſay.——*This Jeſus whom ye have crucified*, ſays *Peter* to the *Jews*: and thus we ſhould ſet things in order before him: Sir, is not this and that highly to diſhonour God, and to *crack* your credit, and to *ſhame* your profeſſion, and to *impair* your body, and to *waſte* your eſtate, and to *wound* your conſcience, and to *damn* your precious and immortal ſoul? And therefore for the Lords ſake think on it, and amend it. A looſe and ſquibbing kind of Reproof, is like an *ignis Lambens*, as ſoon off as on, and does the man more hurt than good. As *Elies* careleſs and looſe reproving of his leud Sons, did rather harden them in their villany, than any way reform them. As it is with weak Phyſick adminiſtred to a ſick-man, it doth only ſtir the humours, but not purge them away, it leaves the body in a greater and worſe diſtemper than it was before. So 'tis here,—— therefore ſays the Apoſtle, *Titus* 1. 13, ἀποτόμως——cuttingly. A finger that is but juſt prickt, and no more, it is apt to wranckle and feſter, and be worſe; but let it bleed, and there is no danger, it will then ſoon be healed.

2. *We muſt Reprove impartially, and without reſpect of perſons.* Good men, if they miſcarry, muſt he reproved as well as bad men. If *Peter* temporize, *Paul* will not ſpare him, nor *Barnabas* neither, they ſhall hear on't, *Gal.* 2. Again, great men, be they never ſo great, they ſhould be admoniſhed as well as others, ſo long as they are under the great God, and ſubject to great failings and miſcarriages; Kings, and Nobles, and Magiſtrates, as well as meaner and inferiour perſons. *Nathan* reproved *David*, though a King; and ſo did *Elijah*, *Ahab*; and *Nehemiah* reproved the Nobles and Rulers for Uſury, and Sabbath-profha-

nation. Certainly, if any be fit to teach great men, they are as fit to reprove them, for both muſt go together, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. That's but a drone-like Preaching, that hath loſt the ſting of Reproving. It is the great unhappineſs of Princes and Nobles, that they have ſo many flatterers about them, and ſo few Reprovers. *Carneades* in *Plutarch* was wont to ſay, that great mens Sons learned nothing well, but to ride horſes; for men would be ſure to flatter them: If they run, they would lag behind, that they might out-run them; if they wreſtled, they would fall on purpoſe, that they might ſeem to caſt them, *&c.* But a horſe not knowing a Prince from a Peaſant, would down with him, if he could not rule him. Juſt ſo 'tis now, let great men do what they will, both againſt Scripture, and Reaſon, and Law, and Conſcience, they will not want their Paraſites, both to encourage them, and applaud them: If there be not a Law for *Cambyſes* to marry his Siſter, tuſh, what of that, there is a Law for *Cambyſes* to do what he pleaſes; and thus men out of cowardize, and fear of frowns, and wrath, dare not reprove guilty Greatneſs. Oh but if a man be a faithful Monitor, he muſt be impartial in his reproof. *Agag* muſt be reproved as well as the pooreſt *Amalekite*; and the Mountains muſt be toucht, let them ſmoke and fume never ſo furiouſly, to allude to that place, *Pſal.* 144. 5. This made that excellent Emperour *Theodoſius* ſo much eſteem *Ambroſe*, *viz.* that he durſt, and would, out of the ſenſe of his duty, reprove even the higheſt and proudeſt.

Ambroſium ab hoc dignum Epiſcopi nomine ſolum novi; but here humility muſt be uſed.

3. *We muſt reprove diſcreetly, making a difference between man and man:* For though it's true, that all are to be reproved that are offenders, eſpecially within the Pale of the Church, 1 *Cor.* 5. 12. Except they be ſcorners, which Chriſt calls Dogs and Swine, *Mat.* 7. 6, and obſtinate Hereticks, *Tit.* 3. 10. Yet all muſt not be handled in the ſame manner; Some will do more with a Rod, than others will do with a Scorpion. A Glaſs is not to be handled ſo roughly as a Brazen Veſſel; this Rule St. *Jude* gives, *ver.* 22, 23.——Some muſt be dealt withal with lenitives, others with corroſives; ſome gently reproved, others ſharply rebuked, according to the tenderneſs or ſtubbornneſs of their diſpoſition, or according to the nature and quality of their offences; and here abundance of Rules might be laid down about publick, private, great, ſmall, ſeldom, or frequent offences. In one word, a Reprover muſt be like the Thraſher, that the Prophet deſcribes, as one ſays, *Iſa.* 28. 27, 28.

4. *We muſt reprove compaſſionately, with the deepeſt ſenſe of our own failings and miſcarriages*; and ſo with the greater pity to their infirmities, *Gal.* 6. 1. *Bernard* ſaid of himſelf, That he never ſaw another man ſin, but he was diſtruſtful and jealous of his own heart, *ille heri, & tu hodie, & ego cras*——and this would file off a great deal of that rigor and roughneſs that renders a Reproof ſo unpleaſing, and ſo unprofitable; for verily Chriſtian tenderneſs and compaſſion in the Reprover, is the beſt way to work ſenſe and paſſion in the ſinner: *Si vis me flere dolendum eſt primum ipſe tibi.*

This

This is the way to mollifie mens hearts; whereas by a lordly, domineering, auſtere, rigid reproof, inſtead of rendring thy Brother Gods friend, thou doſt but render thy ſelf his enemy, *Jam.* 1. 20.

5. *We muſt reprove charitably, with the greateſt love to mens perſons,* even then, when we ſhew the greateſt zeal againſt their ſins; for it is one thing to be angry with the ſins, and another with his perſon; therefore we ſhould conſult our Brothers credit, and eſteem, and honour, and perſon, while we ſtab his ſin; and not (as one ſaid well) in healing a wound in his conſcience and converſation, to leave a skar of reproach upon his perſon, and a brand of ſhame and ignominy upon his Name; that were to do the work of an enemy under the vizard of a friend. And thus I remember the Jews generally interpret the Law, *Lev.* 19. 17.——that is, ſay the *Thalmudiſts* and *Gemariſts*, Thou ſhalt rebuke thy Brother ſo, as to reform him; but thou ſhalt not rebuke thy Brother ſo, as to ſhame him; thou ſhalt rebuke him in love and lenity; he that ſhames his Brother by rebuking him, bears his ſin; nay, ſay they, he that ſhames his Brother, ſhall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Their meaning is, unleſs the fault be notorious, and publick, and ſcandalous, for then they may ſhame him. *I ſpeak it to your ſhame*, ſaith *Paul.*

6. *We muſt reprove meekly; not in rage, and paſſion, and bitterneſs,* but in meekneſs, and ſweetneſs of ſpirit; this Rule the Apoſtle gives, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. Though there may be ſome warmth in a Reproof, ſo as to fetch off the hair, yet it muſt not be ſcalding-hot, ſo as to fetch off the skin. *Elijah* did that with a kiſs, which his man could not do with a ſtaff: Beloved, when a kiſs will do better———oh take heed of carrying your Teeth in your Tongues; Take ſoft words and hard Arguments to convince gain-ſayers; and ſo gentle reproofs, and ſolid reaſons to reduce offenders.

7. *We muſt reprove Scripturally:* My meaning is, as near as we can to reprove our Brethren in Scripture-text, and Scripture-language, that ſo it may not ſeem to be we that ſpeak, ſo much as the ſpirit of our Father that ſpeaks in us; and this is to reprove with authority, *Tit.* 2. 15. What greater Authority and Majeſty wherewith to awaken the conſcience of a ſinner, than the Word of God, by which he ſhould be ruled, and by which he muſt certainly be judged.

Know, Reader, That God took the Author to Glory, before he could finiſh this Sermon for the Preſs.

What Means may be uſed towards the Converſion of our Carnal Relations?

Rom. X. 1.

Brethren, My hearts deſire and prayer to God for Iſrael, is, that they might be ſaved.

THis noble argumentative Epiſtle of the Apoſtle *Paul* to the *Romans*, was w ritten and dated at *Corinth*, when he was now even ready to ſet ſail for *Jeruſalem*, as the meſſenger of the Churches, to convey thither the Collections of *Macedonia*, and other places in *Greece*, made for the poor Saints of *Judea*; as appears by the 15th Chapter of this Epiſtle, [*But now I go unto Jeruſalem to miniſter unto the Saints. For it hath pleaſed them of Macedonia and Achaiah, to make a certain contribution for the poor Saints which are at Jeruſalem*]. It being ſuppoſed to be the ſame journey which is mentioned in the twentieth and one and twentieth Chapter of the *Acts* of the Apoſtles.

Rom. 15. 25, 26.

Act. 29. 3. & 21. 3, &c.

Capellus in hiſt. Apoſtol. P. 76. Calvis. uſſer. Paræus.

The time of the penning this Epiſtle, ſome place in the 14th year of *Claudius* the Emperor, ſome in the ſecond, ſome in the ſixth, ſome in the eighth of *Nero*. 'Tis at preſent impertinent to decide that Chronological controverſie.

It conſiſts principally of two parts; the firſt Doctrinal, the ſecond Hortatory.

The Doctrinal part ſpends its ſtrength upon the great point of Juſtification by Faith, and its glorious effects. Unto which our Apoſtle doth annex a notable diſcourſe of the abſtruſe Myſtery of Predeſtination, from the beginning of the ninth, to the end of the eleventh Chapter; and therein takes occaſion to ſpeak of that doleful Bill of Divorce which God had given to the *Jewiſh* Nation. He treats likewiſe of the Calling and Fulneſs of the Gentiles, and the Reſtauration of *Iſrael* in the latter days.

In

In each of theſe three Chapters he ſadly bewails the deplorable ſtate of his own kindred, and by all the evincing Arguments poſſible, labours for their converſion to the Faith.

To cut off any further Prologue; In the beginning of this tenth Chapter, he pours out his longings after their Salvation.

In the firſt verſe whereof, be pleaſed to obſerve theſe four parts.

1. *Pauls* holy groans and prayers [*my hearts deſire and prayer to God*] εὐδοκία τῆς ἐμῆς καρδίας; The good will, the hearty wiſhes, deſires and panting of my ſoul. He lays open the greateſt earneſtneſs of his Spirit, [εὐδοκίαν, τὴν σφοδρὰν ἐπιθυμίαν φησὶν πολλὴν τὴν σπουδὴν ποιεῖται, &c.] By this his deſire we are to underſtand a marvellous ſtrong intention of ſpirit, and earneſt ſtudy and endeavour about accompliſhment. *Heſychius* expounds the term by βούλεσθαι, ἐθέλειν, ἀγαπᾶν, to will, deſire, wiſh, love and delight in the work. He wills it, not only as a poſſible atchievement, but as aimable; he endeavours to compaſs it by all good means, becauſe he propoſes ſo deſirable an end. The ſincerity of our deſires in obtaining of poſſible deſigns, is manifeſted by our diligent endeavours in the uſe of proper ways to effect them [ὑδονὴ τῶν ἀδυνάτων ἐστὶ, οὐδ' ἐπιθυμεῖ ὡς ἐπὶ πολύ]; *For the moſt part* (ſays the Philoſopher) *no man delights in, or hankers after impoſſibilities.* No rational man certainly. And therefore we are to conceive, that our Apoſtle doth here under his importunate deſires, couch and imply all holy means to accompliſh his end. Upon which account he preſently ſubjoyns [δέησιν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν] *his prayer to God* for that purpoſe: of which afterwards. Only at preſent obſerve from the connexion of his prayers to his hearty deſires; That lively are thoſe prayers which flow from the heart; Moſt harmonious in the ears of God are thoſe groans, that mount up to Heaven upon the wings of ardent emanations, out of the depth of our hearts. *Suſpiria e ſulco pectoris ducta*: When the words of our petitions aſcend warm and reeking out of our bowels; when every expreſſion is dipt in our heart-blood.

Chryſoſt. in loc.

Heſych.

Ariſt. Rhet. l. 2. c. 19.

Note.

2. The perſons that were the ſubject of his prayers and deſires: *For Iſrael.* And here it is conſiderable in what relation *Iſrael* ſtood to the bleſſed Apoſtle. They were his *Brethren*, his *Kinſmen according to the Fleſh. For I alſo* (ſaith *Paul*) *am an Iſraelite, of the ſeed of Abraham, of the Tribe of Benjamin.* In another place he acquaints us, that he was *circumciſed the eighth day, of the ſtock of Iſrael, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews,* (*i. e.* both by Father and Mother) *as touching the Law a Phariſee.* It appears thence, that the *Iſraelites* were his kindred, his own dear and near relations, remaining for the moſt part in a ſtate of ignorance as to the *Meſſiah*, and of alienation and eſtrangement from the Covenant of Grace, and the myſtery of the Promiſe through Faith in the blood of a Mediator. For theſe it is, that our Apoſtle groans; for theſe he is ſo ardent in prayer; for theſe he pours out ſuch earneſt petitions to the Father.

Rom. 9. 3.; Rom. 11. 1. Phil. 3. 5. Acts 23. 6. 2 Cor. 11. 22.

3. The great ſcope and deſign of the Apoſtle for his kindred and relations according to the fleſh, in all his deſires, and endeavours, prayers

was

was, [εἰς σωτηρίαν] *That they might be ſaved.* The earneſt ſollicitude of his ſpirit, the fervent petitions poured out into the Divine boſom, did all combine in this, that his natural might become ſpiritual relations: that his kindred of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, might through union to Chriſt, be allied to him in the Tribe of *Judah*. What is natural to animals and plants [τὸ ἐφίεσθαι, ὃ ἴον αὐτὸ, τοιοῦτον καταλιπεῖν ἕτερον] to thirſt after an impreſſion of their own likeneſs upon another; is much more longed for by the Saints, that others might be holy and happy, as well as themſelves; but eſpecially ſuch as are neareſt to them by the bonds of nature. Holy *Paul* doth not preſs after outward enjoyments, as health, ſtrength, riches, power, or dominion in the world; that *Iſrael* might have proſperity and plenty in their Streets and Palaces, or that the Kingdom ſhould be reſtored to them from the *Romans:* Not the great things of the Earth, but the greater of Heaven: This his ſoul travels with, that Chriſt might be formed in them, and dwell in their hearts by Faith, that ſo *Iſrael* might be ſaved.

Ariſt. Pol. l. 1. c. 1.

4. In theſe words we may obſerve likewiſe the kind compellation, wherewith our Apoſtle doth ſalute the Saints at *Rome*, to whom he wrote this Epiſtle, by the name of *Brethren*. Now, though he wrote to the *Gentiles*, yet he lets them know, that his bowels did yearn over his poor kindred, *that they* alſo *might be ſaved*. The reaſon why in this Letter to the *Romans* he doth ſo pathetically mention theſe his deſires, with ſuch ſtrong and vehement aſſeverations, is, becauſe there were great numbers of the *Jews* at *Rome*, and principally of the two Tribes that returned out of the *Babylonian* Captivity; who after the Warrs of *Pompey*, and other *Roman* Generals and Captains in *Judea*, were very many of them tranſplanted into *Italy:* Which is not only atteſted by Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians: but alſo by Scripture it ſelf, declaring that there was a ſolemn Convocation of the *Jews* aſſembled by *Paul* at his arrival; To whom the Apoſtle did firſt preach the Goſpel, and relate the ſtory of his coming to that Imperial City, by reaſon of his appeal to *Cæſar*.

Act. 28. 17, &c.

From all theſe parts laid down together, there reſults this Doctrinal Concluſion.

Obſerv. *That to endeavour the converſion and ſalvation of our near relations, is a moſt important duty.*

The preſident and example of our holy Apoſtle compared with, and confirmed by other Scriptures, will notably evince the truth of this aſſertion. *The manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* One great end, why God beſtows the graces of his Spirit upon us, is, that we ſhould ſpend the ſavour thereof upon others. Our diſcourſe muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſalt of grace, that it may miniſter edification to others. Our ſpeech ſhould never overflow in abundance, but like the waters of *Nilus*, to render the neighbouring Plantations fruitful. Grace is ſometimes compared to *Light*, by reaſon of its diffuſive nature; that our ſhining converſations might illuſtrate others in the paths of Truth and Holineſs: ſometimes Grace is likened to *Spikenard*, to *perfumed oyntment* which muſt not be ſhut up in a box, though of pureſt Alabaſter,

1 Cor. 12. 7. Col. 4. 6. Eph. 4. 29. Cant. 1. 12. Prov. 27. 9.

Alabaſter, but opened, that the whole houſe may be filled with the fragrant odour thereof. To *oyl*, to the coſtly ſacred Oyl that ran down not only upon the beard of *Aaron*, but to the skirts of his garments. To *Talents*, which muſt be induſtriouſly traded with, and not laid up in napkins. To *Dews*, *Showers*, *Waters*, becauſe of their fructifying vertue. To a *generative Principle*, becauſe of its begetting power and influence. We are therefore commanded, exhorted, directed to *edifie* one another, to *exhort* one another, to *admoniſh* one another, to *turn* one another, as that phraſe in *Ezekiel* ſeems to import [*& converti facite*] and make others to be converted as well as our ſelves; to provoke one another to love and to good works. When converted, we are injoined to ſtrengthen our Brethren, that we may ſave their ſouls from death, and hide a multitude of ſins. Joh. 12. 3. Pſal. 133. 2. 1 Theſ. 5. 11. Rom. 14. 19. Heb. 3. 13. Col. 3. 16. וְחַשִּׁיבוּן Ezek. 18. 30. Heb. 10. 24. Jam. 5. 20.

Now the principal Objects of this excellent duty are ſuch with whom we converſe; to whom we are obliged and connected by the bonds and links of nature, office, or vicinity of habitation.

Hence was it that our bleſſed Lord, while he walked in the valley of his Incarnation, exerciſed his Miniſtry moſt part among his kindred, relations, and neighbours; at *Nazareth*, *Capernaum*, *Bethſaida*, near the Sea of *Tiberias*, at *Cana*, and other Regions of *Galilee*, in which parts he had received his Education. *Andrew* when he underſtood the call of Chriſt, the great Saviour of the world, he preſently ſeeks out his Brother *Simon* to bring him to the *Meſſiah*. *Philip* after the like manifeſtation, looks out for *Nathaniel*, and in a great extaſie of ſpirit, cries out [ἕυρηκα, ἕυρηκα,] *We have found him of whom Moſes and the Prophets did write*. There are many inſtances of this nature both in the Old and new Teſtament. *Abraham* and *Joſhua* were famous in their Generations for this work; they counted it their principal buſineſs, they made it their great care to inſtruct their Families in the fear and ſervice of the great God. *David* alſo ingages to *walk in his houſe* with a perfect heart, that by his exemplary pattern he might gain over his Family to the Lord. *Matthew* the Publican (we read) did invite all the Tribute-gatherers that were of his own Fraternity and Profeſſion, to a great Feaſt, that they might ſit down with Chriſt, and feed upon his heavenly Doctrine. The great man in the City of *Capernaum* brings in his whole Family to the belief of the Truth. *Cornelius* the *Roman* Centurion, who *was* quartered at *Ceſarea*, calls his relations together, to hear the Doctrine of Faith and Repentance. The woman in the Goſpel having found the loſt groat, after great pains and diligence, calls in her friends and neighbours to rejoyce with her. *Criſpus*, and the Jaylor, and *Lydia*, and *Stephen*, are eminent examples of this duty; by whoſe conſcientious care and procurement, it may be ſuppoſed, that their whole houſholds came under the roof of Chriſt; becauſe preſently after that we have heard of their own perſonal Baptiſm, we find their Families alſo waſhed in that ſacred Laver. Joh. 1. 41. Joh. 1. 45. Pſal. 101. 2. Luk. 5. 29. John 4. 53. Act. 10. 24. Luk. 15. 9.

I ſhall not inſiſt upon Arguments, to prove the incumbent neceſſity of this duty, or Motives to allure you to the practice of it: I might deduce

duce it as an inference conſequent from the Law of Nature, to uſe our greateſt endeavours that our Relations might obtain an union to the beſt and higheſt good. I might draw it from the Divine Injunction. I might excite your diligence from the conſideration of the dreadful danger following its neglect; from the comfort that will flow into thy boſom upon the exerciſe of it, ſince it is a notable evidence of the ſincerity of Grace in thine own heart. None but ſuch as have ſeen and taſted, can cry out to others with an holy affectionate vehemency, O come *taſte and ſee that the Lord is good!* The Wine of the Kingdom having once warmed the hearts of Saints, ſends up vivacious ſpirits, and fills their mouths with a holy loquacity. I might further provoke thee to this excellent work, by the rich benefit in gaining ſuch to love thee, whoſe affections will exceed all natural love whatever, and by the great reward that ſhall enſue in the life to come. For *they that turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars for ever and ever.*

Pſal. 78. 5.

Pſal. 34. 8.

Dan. 12. 3.

O Brethren, if Families were holy, then Cities, then Nations would quickly prove Mountains of Holineſs, and Seats for the Throne of God. We are apt to cry out of bad times; Alas, thoſe unclean Neſts of ungodly Families have been the cauſes of all the wickedneſs in all Ages and Generations to this day. Therefore whoever thou art on whom the Grace of God hath ſhined, ſtudy that holy art of Divine Reflection, and Re-percuſſion of that light on others hearts, which brings me to to an uſeful and practical Queſtion.

Queſt. You'l ſay, *What courſe ſhall we take, what means ſhall we uſe, what method will you preſcribe, that we may be able to manage this important and weighty duty; that we may be helpful towards the converſion and ſalvation of our near Relations that are in the ſtate of nature?*

I confeſs this Queſtion is of grand importance, and being properly ſolved, may prove of great influence in all places where we are caſt by Divine Providence. There is ſcarce a family, ſcarce a perſon living, who may not be comprehended within the verge and limits of this diſcourſe.

Anſ. In anſwer therefore to it, I ſhall ſpend the principal part of my time: and that I may handle it the more diſtinctly, I ſhall rank ſuch as may deſire ſatisfaction and direction in this weighty and excellent caſe, under three forms or orders: Such as are either Superiours, Equals, or Inferiours. But before I enter into the main body of the Anſwer, I ſhall crave leave to premiſe three things.

1. That this Queſtion is not to be underſtood of perſons in publick capacity and concernment, as Magiſtrates or Miniſters; but of Family-Relations, Kindred Co-habitants, Neighbours, Friends, and Acquaintants, of ſuch as have frequent converſe together in Civil Societies, and often commerce in dealings; but principally of Oeconomical Relatives, or ſuch as are nigh to each other by blood or affinity.

2. That Saving-Converſion is in the power of God alone to effect, as being the primary and principal efficient cauſe of all thoſe gracious works that accompany ſalvation. There is none able to kindle Grace in the heart, but he who hath his fire in *Zion*, and his furnace in *Jeruſalem*.

Yet

Yet notwithſtanding all of us in our ſeveral ſtations, as ſubordinate inſtruments, may and muſt uſe all wholſome means that are of Divine Appointment, conducing to ſuch a bleſſed end.

3. That there are different ſtates, conditions, capacities, and qualifications among ſuch Relations, whoſe converſion we ſhould endeavour. Some being perhaps enormouſly and outragiouſly wicked; others morally civil; and yet further, others poſſibly may be conformable to the inſtitutions of the external worſhip of God. Of theſe I may ſpeak [*Sparſim, opere intertexto*] as the particulars will bear, together with ſuch other appendant caſes that may hold ſome conſanguinity with the general Queſtion.

To begin then with the firſt branch.

Queſt. 1. *What means Superiors (principally in Family-relations) ſhould uſe to draw on their inferiours to reliſh and ſavour the things of God?* True it is what *Jerom* ſays [*ſiunt, non naſcuntur Chriſtiani*] No man is born a Chriſtian, but an heir of wrath and Divine juſtice. For the obtaining of the New birth then, in ſuch as are commited to our charge: I ſhall draw up directions under Twelve Heads. Some whereof, though uſual and obvious, in ſuch as treat upon Oeconomical duties, yet being further improved, may by no means be here paſt by in ſilence, ſince they are exceeding uſeful, and no leſs practical than others. Moſt men under the Goſpel periſh for want of practiſing known Duties; wherefore let me beg of thee, O Chriſtian, that every preſcription may be duly weighed, and conſcientiouſly improved, ſo ſhalt thou not doubt of admirable ſucceſs through Divine aſſiſtance. *Hieronym. ad Letam. Tom. 1. p. 55. edit. Lugd. 1530.*

1. In the firſt place, Preſerve and uphold the honour and preheminence of that ſtation wherein God hath ſet you, by all prudent means. The Prophet bewails thoſe times wherein the *Child ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the Ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable.* Iſa. 3. 5. Diſtance of years calls for diſtance of deportment. A Father may challenge honour and reverence; a Maſter his due fear and ſubjection from his ſervant. What is duty in the inferiour to yield, is prudence in the ſuperiour to maintain. It is therefore wiſely adviſ'd by the Philoſopher, that no perſons ſhould marry over-early [λίαν πάρεγγυς εἶναι πολλὴν ἔχει δυχέρειαν ἥτε γὰ ἀιδῶς ἧττον ὑπάρχει τοῖς τοιούτοις ὥσπερ ἡ λικιώταις χ) περὶ τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐγ κλημαπικὸν τὸ πάρεγγυς] For if Parents and Children prove too near in age, there may follow great inconveniencies: In that, too much propinquity of years diminiſheth reverence in children, and oftentimes produces contentions in the management of Family-affairs. Let ſuch a diſtance be preſerved, as may obtain the effectual iſſue of that counſel which *Jerom* gives to *Gaudentius* about the education of *Pacatula* [*Matris nutum pro verbis ac monitis & pro imperio habeat. Amet ut Parentem, ſubjiciatur ut Dominæ, timeat ut Magiſtram.* Let the Child eſteem the nod of her Mother in lieu of words, admonitions, and commands; let the Mother be loved as a Parent, ſubjected to as a Lady, feared as a Miſtreſs.] Condeſcenſion to mean, ſordid, and contemptible actions, draws ſcorn and diſdain upon Superiours. As reverence and obedience is injoyned to inferiours; ſo Rulers ſhould manage and order their actions with ſuch gravity and *Ariſt. Pol. l. 7. c. 16.* *Hieronym. ad Gaudent. Tom. 1. p. 101.*

ſobriety before them, as may gain ſome awe and reſpect from their hearts. No wonder, if that Ruler be contemned and ſlighted, who diſgraceth himſelf. Some are apt to count it a piece of gracious humility and lowlineſs of ſpirit, but they are greatly miſtaken: It argues rather a baſe, low, degenerate temper. Be as humble before God, as reverential to Rulers, as affable to Equals as thou canſt; but ever remember to maintain the eminency of thy place above inferiors. It is not heavenly, no nor moral wiſdom, to entertain diſcourſe of trivial and frivolous matters, with thoſe that are under your inſpection and government. Let converſe with inferiors be ſpent, not upon ſuperfluous, but neceſſary ſubjects. It is a good precept of the *Stoick*, to abſtain from moving of laughter by jeſts among familiars, for it will have that influence, [*τὴν αἰδῶ τὴν πρὸς σὲ ἀνιέναι*] to leſſen their reverence towards thee. There is a great deal of reverence to be manifeſted by Superiors towards Youth; if they would cheriſh and preſerve that due reverence which ought to be in the hearts of young ones towards themſelves. And yet notwithſtanding you muſt not carry your ſelves with any proud, ſupercilious, or faſtuous deportment; your countenance, though grave, yet muſt not be ſtern. As you need not indent your cheeks with continual ſmiles, ſo neither to plow your fore-heads with rough and ſower wrinkles. A ſober affability, an unaffected and amiable gravity will ſufficiently chaſtiſe contempt, and nouriſh a reverent love. Rigid auſterity in words and actions, will produce a ſlaviſh diſ-ſpirited temper in children and ſervants, that when they come to years they prove either more difficult to pleaſe than their Fathers before them, or elſe ſo puſillanimous, that they are rendred unfit to manage the work of their Generation among whom they converſe. It is a maxim of *Plato* [*σφοδρὰ καὶ ἀχρία δούλωσις ταπεινὰς καὶ ἀνελευθέρους καὶ μισανθρώπους, &c. ἐπιτελεῖ*] that over-much ruſtick ſlavery renders them dejected, illiberal, and haters of mankind. Carry your ſelves therefore in that manner, that they may neither fear or hate your moroſity, nor grow wanton upon the commonneſs and ſupinity of your carriage. If inferiors repute their Rulers not wiſe enough to govern them, all their inſtructions will fall to the ground [*Regimen eſſe non poteſt, niſi fuerit judicium in rectore judicium*] Judgment and Prudence in a Ruler, is the foundation of the conſiſtency of Government.

Epiſtet. c. 54.

Maxima debetur pueris reverentia.

Μάλιϛ αἰσχυνετὸ σαυτὸν Pythag. aut. carm.

Plato de leg. l. 7. Tom. 2. p. 791 Ed. H. Steph.

Salvian. de Gub. Dei. l. 1. p. 20. Ed. Oxon.

2. Be frequent, and pithy, and clear, in Family-inſtruction. Nature, without Moral diſcipline is blind, could a Heathen ſay. Without Heavenly inſtruction, it's ſealed up to Eternal darkneſs. We are all like Barren-heaths, and Stony-deſerts by nature: Inſtruction is the culture and improvement of the ſoul. 'Tis obſerved by Naturaliſts, that Bees do [*βεαχῶν λίθον ἐν τοῖς ποσὶ κομίζειν*] carry ſmall gravel in their feet, to poize their little bodies through the ſtormy winds. Such are inſtructions to the floating and wavering minds of youth. The keel of their weak judgments would ſoon over-ſet, without the ballaſt of Diſcipline; their converſations would ſoon prove unfruitful, or over-ſpread with the rampant briers of vice and ſin, unleſs well manured and laboured upon, and moiſtned with the ſweet ſhowers of parental teachings. Wherefore all

Plut. de Educ. Ed. H. Steph. p. 2.

Ælian. de anim. l. 1. c. 11.

in-

inferiors are by God referred to their Rulers, that they may drink in the ſoul-refreſhing dews of prudent Precepts. Even women are commanded *to learn in ſilence*, with all ſubjection, γυναικὶ κόσμον σιγὴ φέρει, Silence is a womans ornament, as a great Maſter of wiſdom hath obſerved: Their ears ſhould be more exerciſed than their tongues. *If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home*, who are commanded *to dwell with them according to knowledg*. As for ſervants and children, the caſe is more evident and clear: But in all your inſtructions, have a care of tedious prolixity; make up the ſhortneſs of your diſcourſe by frequency. Thou art injoyned to talk of Gods Precepts, *when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up.* A little now, and a little then. When thou wouldeſt accuſtom a child to any uſeful quality, begin betimes, ('tis the counſel even of a Heathen) but yet ἐκ παραγωγῆς δ' ἐθίζειν, inure him by degrees. As the Precepts and Axioms by which a wiſe man ſhould guide his life, according to the royal Moraliſt, ſhould be [βραχέα καὶ συγκεφαλαιώδη] brief and compendious: So much more for youth. Long Orations burthen their ſmall memories too much, and (through ſuch imprudence) may occaſion the loathing of ſpiritual Manna, conſidering their being yet in the ſtate of nature. As Phyſicians in their Diætetical Precepts preſcribe to children little and often: ſo muſt we deal with beginners in the things of God. A young plant may quickly be over-glutted with manure, and rotted with too much watering. Weak eyes newly opened from ſleep, cannot bear the glaring Windows, ſcarce a candle at the firſt. *Line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little.* You muſt drive the little ones, as *Jacob* did, very gently towards *Canaan*.

Deut. 32. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 11. *Ariſt. Pol. l* 1. *c.* 8. *p.* 86. 1 Cor. 14. 35. 1 Pet. 3. 7. Iſa. 38, 19. Deut. 6. 7. & 11, 18. *Ariſt. Pol. l.* 7. *c.* 17. *Antonin. de ſeipſo. l.* 4. *p.* 69 *Ed. Lon.* 1643. Iſa. 28. 20. Gen. 33. 13.

Entertain their tender attentions with diſcourſes of Gods infinite greatneſs, and amiable goodneſs; of the glories of heaven, of the torments of hell. Things that affect the ſenſes muſt be ſpiritualized to them; catch their affections by a holy craft. Deal as much in ſimilitudes as thou canſt. If you be together in a Garden, draw ſome ſweet and heavenly diſcourſe out of the beautiful flowers: If by a River-ſide, treat of the waters of Life, and the Rivers of pleaſure that are at Gods right-hand: If in a Field of Corn, ſpeak of the nouriſhing quality of the bread of Life: If you ſee Birds flying in the air, or hear them ſinging in the Woods, teach them the All-wiſe Providence of God, that gives them their meat in due ſeaſon: If thou lookeſt up to the Sun, Moon, and Stars, tell them, they are but the ſhining ſpangles of the out-houſes of heaven: Oh then what glory is there within! If thou ſeeſt a Rain-bow to diaper ſome wateriſh cloud, talk of the Covenant of God. Theſe and many more may be like ſo many golden links, drawing Divine things into their memories. *I have uſed ſimilitudes* by my ſervants the Prophets, ſaith God. Moreover, let young ones read and learn by heart ſome portions of the Hiſtorical Books of holy Scripture. But above all, the beſt way of inſtruction, eſpecially as to the younger ſort, may be performed by Catechiſms, Plat-forms of ſound words, by Queſtion and Anſwer in a ſhort com-

Hoſea 12. 10. 2 Tim. 1. 13.

compendious method; whoſe terms being clear and diſtinct, might be phraſed out of holy Scripture, and fitted to their capacities by a plain, though ſolid ſtile, and to their memories by brief expreſſions.

Object. *But ſome may object, That Children, not well underſtanding what they repeat, do but prophane the Name of God.*

Anſw. To this I anſwer: That our reaſonings ought not to countermand, or contradict Divine injunctions. We are commanded by God in the Book of *Deuteronomy*, to whet the Law upon our *Children*. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* By the bending of young trees, and putting young fruit into glaſſes, you may form them into what ſhape you pleaſe. The Apoſtle commends the preſident of *Timothy* to the whole Chriſtian world, that [ἀπὸ βρέφους] from a little ſucking-child, as the word imports, he had known the holy Scripture. Some children have been ſanctified from the birth, as is evident in *Jeremy*, and *John Baptiſt*. Now we being ignorant who are under the Election of God, muſt uſe the means to all, eſpecially ſuch as are under the fœderal ſtipulation between God and us; ſuch as are the children of believing Parents. They are commanded to *remember their Creator in the days of their youth*: And who ſhould make ſuch impreſſions of God upon their hearts, but thoſe that are over them by Divine appointment, who ought to *bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.* As ſeals are to be imprinted upon the Wax, while it is tender: [ὕτως αἱ μαθήσεις ταῖς τῶν ἔτι παίδων ψυχαῖς ἐναποτυπῶνται] ſo, teaching and inſtruction will beſt fix upon their minds while yet they are children. So ſoon as ever reaſon begins to ſprout forth, yea, as ſoon as they are drawn from the breaſts, begin to ſeaſon younglings with the ſenſe of Gods Majeſty and Mercy. Gardeners begin to graft, ſo ſoon as ever the ſap begins to ariſe in the ſpring, and the bud of the ſtock to ſwell and inlarge. Colts muſt be backt before their mettle grow too high; and Heifers muſt be uſed to the Yoak before they attain to their full ſtrength, or elſe they will prove unſerviceable. God commanded in the old Law, more Lambs, Kids, and Bullocks, young Turtles, and Pigeons, to be offered upon his Altar, than thoſe of elder growth: First-fruits and Green-corn muſt be preſented to the Lord. To intimate the dedication of our children (thoſe *reaſonable Sacrifices*) unto the Temple and ſervice of God, while they are young and tender. The ſooner you ſow the ſooner you may reap. *Sow thy ſeed in the morning*, ſays *Solomon*. The benefit of timely inſtruction is ſcarce imaginable. But I come to the Third.

Deut. 6. 7. Prov. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Jer. 1. 5. Luk. 1. 41, 44 Eccleſ. 12. 1. Epheſ. 6. 4. *Plut. de Educat. puer.* p. 5. Iſa. 28. 9. Levit. 2. 14. Rom. 12. 1. Eccleſ. 11. 9.

3. Add to thine inſtructions preceptive injunctions, lay it as a charge upon their ſouls in the Name of God, that they hearken to, and obey thine *Inſtitutions*. Every houſe is under a kind of Kingly Government [πᾶσα οἰκία βασιλεύεται, &c. διμισάνει δ' ἕκαστος παίδων καὶ δ' ἀλόχων] and a Ruler gives Laws to Wife and Children. An inſtance we have in the caſe of *Solomon*, who acquaints us that he was *his Fathers Son, tender and only beloved in the ſight of his Mother. He taught me alſo, and ſaid unto me, Let thine heart retain my words, keep my Commandments and live.*

Ariſt. Pol. l. 1. c. 1. Prov. 4. 3, 5.

When

When *David* was ready to dye, *Solomon*, the Text ſays, was [*yet young and tender*] and notwithſtanding that, his Father inſtructs him in many grave and excellent leſſons, and in the Book of *Kings* 'tis remarkable, that when *Davids* deceaſe drew nigh, *he charged Solomon his ſon, ſaying*, &c. Now when *Solomon* came to the Crown, he was but eighteen years old, or nineteen at the moſt, as the learned ſeem to evince from ſeveral paſſages of *Davids* reign. How young then was he when his Father *David*, and his Mother *Bathſhebah* began to inſtruct him, and lay their preceptive charge upon him? This charging of obedience upon young ones, is like the tying and claying on of the graft upon the ſtock. [*Non multis opus eſt, ſed efficacibus*] Efficacious words, rather than many, are to be ſought, ſtudied, and uſed. 1 Chron. 22. 5. & 29. 1. 1 Chron 28. 9. &c. 1 King. 2. 1. *Uſſer. annal. pt.* 1 p. 56. *Rawleigh's H. pt.* 1. 2. c. 18. ſect. 4. *Senec. Epiſt.* 38.

Nay, women have both preſident and precept alſo for this work, as who do more frequently converſe with their children in their tender Age. We have an excellent example in *Bathſheba* teaching her Son, and *preſſing* Divine precepts upon his heart, ſhe gave alſo a portion of inſtruction, as well as of food to her ſervants and maidens. Antient Matrons are commanded alſo by the Apoſtle to teach younger women the works of ſobriety and obedience. For this matter *Abraham* was commended by God himſelf, as a pattern to all poſterity. *I know him* (ſays God) *that he will* command *his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord to do juſtice and judgment*, &c. And therefore God was pleaſed to reveal ſecrets to him. To conclude, It is good to edg your precepts and inſtructions with ſome notable remembrances of the great day, as that holy and learned Mr. *Bolton* did to his children upon his Death-bed; for ſpeaking of the inſtructions that he had given them in the time of his ſickneſs, and before, he hoped they would remember it, and verily believed *that none of them durſt think to meet him at that great Tribunal in an unregenerate ſtate.* Prov. 1. 8. & 6. 10. & 31. 1. Pr. 31. 15, 16. Titus 2. 3, 4. Gen. 18. 19. Mr. *Bolton's* Life, p 33. Printed with his Works. 4to. *Anno* 1639.

4. Set a narrow guard upon the firſt ſproutings of ſin in their converſations. Cruſh vipers in the Egg. Exerciſe your hazle-rods upon the Sepents heads, when they firſt creep out of their holes, being chill and feeble in the beginning of the ſpring. I will *early* deſtroy all the wicked of the Land, ſays *David*. You muſt ſet about this work betimes, check every evil and unſavoury word at the firſt hearing; watch the beginnings, the firſt bubblings of corruption in them. A man may pull off a tender bud with eaſe, but if he let it grow to a branch, it will coſt him ſome pains. It is obſerved by experienced Naturaliſts, that a Common bringing forth nothing but Fern, may be made very good ground: if when the weed comes up tender and green, it be often cut down, you will (in three or four times) diſcourage the root, and make it dye away. It may prove ſo through Divine bleſſing, as to the ſhootings up of original corruption, if thou be diligent and conſtant at firſt. Take us the Foxes, nay the *little Foxes*, that ſpoil the Vines; this is the way to deſtroy their race, as well as to preſerve your tender Grapes. *David* ſmote *Goliah* in the fore-head; he ſmites the Devil and ſin in the fore-head [*qui initio tentationis vincit*] that falls upon, and overcomes temptation at Pſal. 101. 8. Cant. 2. 15. *Stella in loc.*

at firſt. It is a ſaying of *Salvian* [*Cum primum homo peccare incipit, Æternum ſibi accendit ignem*]. When one firſt begins to ſin, then he kindles the Eternal fire]. Oh that you would then begin to caſt water upon the firſt kindlings of ſin in your little ones! Cut off the occaſions of ſin by prudent interpoſition. It is ſtrange to ſee, what excuſes and palliations for ſin, what colluſions in ſpeech little Children will uſe? Before thou canſt teach them to ſpeak plain Engliſh, the Devil, and a corrupt heart, will teach them to ſpeak plain lies. While their tongues do yet falter much in pronunciation, they'l faulter more in double ſpeaking. What great need is there then to put a curb and bridle upon thy childs tongue as well as thine own. Undermine their fallacies by diſcreet examinations, and ſagacious queſtions. If this work be not ſet to betimes, poſſibly in proceſs of years they may prove too cunning to be catcht, unleſs thou ſeaſon them quickly with the awe of Gods judgments, and the danger of ſin: Teach their conſcience to bluſh, as well as their cheeks, that they may from an in-wrought principle eſchew the evil, and do the good. Elſe they may too ſoon prove like to the Hares in *Ælian*, that by leaping this way and that way, when they come nigh their muſe, do [ταράξαι τὰ ἴχνη] confound their footſteps to prevent diſcovery. If thou ſuffer a child, or a young ſervant, to go on in ſin unregarded, untaught, unchid, and think 'tis too little to mind at firſt; that ſinful folly will be thy ſcourge in the end. God many times whips an aged Parent by that child which was unwhipt at firſt. *Adonijah* had well nigh broken the deſign of *David* about *Solomons* being ſet in the Throne; whom his Father had *never diſpleaſed* by ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo? that is, never checkt him for his faults. The means to take away the root and foundation of evil cuſtoms and habits, is to fall a weeding in the ſpring of thy childs life [*Ægre reprehendas quod ſinis conſueſcere*]. Reproofs will go down untowardly, when children come once to their *teens*, when their years come up to double numbers.

Salv. de Gub. Dei l. 4 p 116.

Pſal. 39. 1.

Ælian. de animal. l. 6. c. 47.

1 King. 1. 6.

Hieron. ad Gaud. p. 101.

5. Preſerve them from evil ſociety. *David* not only hated ſin in general; but eſpecially he deteſted to have it become an inmate in his houſe. *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe*; *He that telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight*. That ſo the evil example, and pitch-like ſociety of wicked perſons might not cleave to, and corrupt his near Relations. Children are like the *Polypus* in *Ælian*, that turns into colour of that rock or weed in the Sea that lies neareſt. Imitation is natural to Children: Aſſociates and companions are the patterns of their imitation. Wherefore *Plutarch* in his Tract about the education of children, adviſing ſome *Grecian* boys to be brought up with them, gives this precept that theſe σύντροφα παιδία ſhould be σωφρονα τὰς τρόπους, of vertuous manners and behaviours, leſt children ſhould contract ſome vice from ill ſociety. For, according to the Proverb, He that lives with a lame man, will learn to limp. Nay, one greater than *Plutarch* tells us, That *with a furious man we ſhould not go, leſt we learn his ways*. Children eſpecially, may be dangerouſly infected by lewd and corrupt company. Many children of godly parents have had their manners fouled and vitiated

Pſal. 101. 7, 8

Ælian. Var. hiſt.

Plut. περὶ παιδ. p. 6.

Prov. 22. 24, 25.

vitiated extreamly by frequent and familiar converſe with the naughty children of wicked neighbours.

6. In the next place, Let ſeaſonable and prudent rebukes be adminiſtred, according to the nature and quality of their offences. Begin gently, uſe all perſwaſive motives to draw and allure them, if poſſible, to the ways of God; tell them of the rewards of glory, of the ſweet ſociety in Heaven: Endeavour to ſatisfie their hearts, that God is able to fill their ſouls with ſuch joys, as are not to be found in the creatures. *Of ſome having compaſſion, making a difference.* But if this will not do, then begin to mix ſome more ſevere expreſſions of thy holy anger againſt ſin. As there is a concatenation in virtues, ſo in paſſions. Love and Anger are not altogether [ἀσύζατα] incompatible affections. Nay, love may be the principle and foundation of that anger, which ſhoots its rebuking Arrows againſt the Butt of ſin. It is well obſerved by the Philoſopher [Γίγνεται τὰ ἐγκλήματα καὶ αἱ μέμψεις ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὸ χρήσιμον φιλίᾳ], There may be accuſations and reprehenſions connext with that love, which deſigns the profit and benefit of the perſons beloved, and that (ἐυλόγως as he ſays) according to the Rule even of right reaſon. Thou mayeſt tell thy child, and that with ſome grains of vehemency, that if he continue in ſinful courſes, that God will be angry, and thou wilt be angry; and then let him know what a *fearful thing it is, to fall into the hands of the living God.* This is the way to *be angry, and not to ſin,* as the Apoſtle commands. Let not your paſſions, like unruly torrents, overflow the banks that are limited by Scripture and reaſon. There is a grave and ſober anger, that will procure Reverence, and advance Reformation. That which is mixt with horrid noiſe and clamours, floweth from the breaſts of fools. In vain ſhalt thou attempt to reclaim others, who art ſo exorbitant thy ſelf. He that lets looſe the reins upon the necks of the unruly horſes of his paſſions, will endanger the tumbling his reaſon out of the Chariot. How ſhall that perſon in his rebukes ſpeak reaſon to another, that hath loſt his own? He that is a ſlave to his iraſcible appetite, can never manage ingenuous reproofs. A child can never perſwade himſelf that ſuch anger proceedeth from love, when he is made the ſink to receive the daily diſgorgements of a Cholerick ſtomach; when the unhappy neceſſity of his relation tyes him to be always in the way, where an angry diſpoſition muſt vent and empty it ſelf. If thou that ruleſt be thus unruly, how canſt thou expect thy Inferiours to be regular, when thy uncomely demeanour does almoſt convince them, that love can hardly be the genuine root of thine anger, but that they are made the ſad objects of thy native temper, or that thy reprehenſion is ſpiced with hatred? Obſerve therefore a prudent adminiſtration of thy Rebukes. Gild thoſe bitter pills with the hopes of recovering thy favour upon amendment; mix theſe unpleaſant potions [τοῖς γλυκέσι χυμοῖς] with ſome ſweet emollient juyces, that ſuch interwoven lenity may procure acceſs for your admonitions, and effect your deſired iſſue. The quality of the offence, and the various aggravations of it, muſt ſtate the quantity, meaſure, and duration of thine anger.

Jude 22.

Ariſt. Ethic. l. 10. c. 13.

Heb. 10. 31. Epheſ. 4. 26.

Plut. il. p. 22. *Gaſſend. in Epicur. Tom.* 3. p. 1511.

Great

Great faults, if repeated, deſerve a greater ardency of ſpirit. Conſider, likewiſe the ſtation and place of thy ſeveral relations. A Wife ought not to be rebuked before Children and Servants, leſt her ſubordinate authority be diminiſhed. Contempt caſt upon the Wife, will reflect upon the Husband at laſt. Yea, for ſmaller offences in Children and Servants, if they be not committed openly, rebuke them apart, and in private. But above all, Take heed thou be not found more ſevere in reproving faults againſt thy ſelf, than ſins againſt the great God. *They*
1 Sam. 2. 30. *that honour me* (ſaith God to *Eli*, in the caſe of his ſons) *I will honour: and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* It is a point of excellent wiſdom to manage thy Family aright in theſe caſes. A Pilot may ſhew as much skill and dexterity in ſteering of a little Catch or Pinnace of pleaſure, as of the vaſt Gallions of *Spain*. If thou haſt cauſe to be angry, yet let not thy ſtorms run all upon the Rocks, but endeavour
Plut. *ib.* p. 23. [ταχέως ὑποφλεγμῆναι, μᾶλλον ὀξύθυμον εἶναι δεῖ τὸν πατέρα ἢ βαρύθυμον] ſpeedily to cool the Inflamation, to abate the Feaver, and ſlake the fire of anger: It is better for a Father to be often and nimble, than to be heavy and durable in his wrath. Wink at infirmities; if not ſuch as are immediately ſinful, chide them with frowns, and not with bitter aſſaults; reſerve thy publick and ſharp reprehenſions for open and ſcandalous offences, for reiterated and repeated tranſgreſſions which bear a ſhew of great neglect, if not of ſome contempt and diſdain.

7. Keep up a conſtant and vigorous practice of holy Duties in thy
Joſh. 24. 15. family. As for me, ſays *Joſhuah*, *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord.*
Deut. 6. 7. *Moſes* commanded the *Iſraelites* to go over the Laws and Precepts which he had given them from God, in their own families, in private among their Children. The Inſtructions and Exhortations of Gods Miniſters in publick, ſhould be repeated at home, and whetted to and again upon
1 Sam. 9. 12, the little ones. *Samuel* had a Feaſt upon the Sacrifice in his own houſe.
22. *Job* and others had Sacrifices in their own Families. The Paſſe-
Exod. 12. 3, 4. over-Lamb was to be eaten in every particular houſe. God ſays, he
Zech. 12. 12, will *pour out* his *fury upon the families that call not upon his Name.* There
13. are times that *every family* muſt be *apart*, as well as *every wife* and perſon *apart*. All the Males of *Abrahams* Family were appointed to paſs under the ordinance of Circumciſion. The keeping up of Family-duties makes every little houſe become a Sanctuary, a *Bethel*, a houſe of God. And here I would adviſe, that Chriſtians be not over-tedious in their Duties of private Worſhip. I have heard from a near relation of that holy man Mr. *Dod*, that he gave this counſel, that the conſtant Family-prayers ſhould not ordinarily exceed above a quarter of an hour, if ſo much. The morning and evening Sacrifices at the Temple, and the Paſſe-over-offerings (which were for every family) conſiſted but of one Lamb. Take heed of making the ways of God irkſome, and unpleaſant. If God draw forth thy heart ſometimes, do not reject and repreſs Divine breathings; but uſually labour for ſuccinctneſs and brevity, ſuch as may ſtand with holy reverence to God, ſo as not to huddle over excellent and weighty duties, and yet ſuch as may render religious worſhip, deſirable

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in the eyes of thoſe whom thou wouldeſt have to look towards *Canaan.* The Spirit is willing many a time, when the Fleſh is weak, and a perſon may better for a little time keep his thoughts from wandring and diſcompoſure, when as the large expence of Expreſſions gives occaſion for too much diverſion. *God is in Heaven, and thou upon Earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Eccleſ. 5. 2. When our Lord gave his Diſciples a form of Prayer, which was for quotidian and daily uſe, as appears by that petition, Give us *this day* our daily bread: you know how ſhort and compendious it is. The Spirits are like ſtrings of Harps and Bows, which if never remitted and ſlackened, will crack, and make thoſe Inſtruments unſerviceable. It is of good uſe likewiſe to vary the duties of Religion; ſometimes ſing, and ſometimes read, ſometimes repeat, ſometimes catechize, ſometimes exhort [*Orationi lectio, lectioni ſuccedat oratio, breve videbitur tempus, quod tantis operum varietatibus occupatur*]. It was the direction of that holy Hermit of *Bethlehem.* Let reading ſucceed prayer, and prayer reading: That time will ſeem ſhort, which is exerciſed with ſuch variety of works. *Ariſtotle* obſerves out of a Poet, [μεταβολὴ πάντων γλυκύτατον, διὰ πονηρίαν] That Change is a moſt ſweet thing, by reaſon of our pravity. Indeed, ſays the Philoſopher, unto ſimple natures, the ſame action is moſt pleaſant, and therefore God delights in one and the ſame ſimple pleaſure. However let us uſe the beſt art we can to draw on our own hearts, as well as of inferiors, to delight more conſtantly in holy duties. But in two things be principally frequent; the offering up the ſacrifice of prayers, and the keeping of children to read daily ſome portion of holy Scriptures, as *Jerom* counſelled *Læta* [*Reddat tibi penſum quotidie de Scripturarum floribus carptum*]; Let thy child give thee a daily account of ſome choice flowers cropt out of the Bible. *Plut. de liber. educ.* *Hieron. Tom. 1. p. 57.* *Ariſt. Ethic. l. 7. c. 14.* *Hieron. p. 57.*

8. Endeavour by all good means to draw them to publick ordinances: for there God is in a more ſpecial manner preſent. *There he hath commanded a bleſſing and life for evermore:* There he *walketh among his golden Candleſticks. When the King ſitteth at his Table, the Spikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof.* He makes the place of his feet to be glorious. Though it were Gods appointment that the males only ſhould at the ſolemn feaſts repair to *Shiloh*; yet *Elkanah* carries up *all his houſe* to the yearly Sacrifice. He would have his Wife, and Children, and Servants, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his Temple, and you know what a great bleſſing ſucceeded upon *Hannah. Cornelius* alſo when *Peter* came to preach at *Cæſarea* upon Gods immediate command, he calls together all his kindred and acquaintants to hear the Sermon. *Jeſſe* and his Sons came together to the Sacrifice, which *Samuel* offered to the Lord at *Bethlehem.* It is an ungodly wicked cuſtome to leave many Children and Servanrs at home needleſly upon the Lords Day. Indeed in great and numerous Families, where there are many ſmall Children, that might diſturb the Congregation, and where much proviſion is neceſſary for ſuch as attend upon God in the duties of Worſhip, there the caſe is ſomewhat altered; for ſuch works of mercy are diſpens'd with Pſal. 133. 3. Rev. 2. 1. Cant. 1. 12. 1 Sam. 1. 21. Act. 10. 24. 1 Sam. 16. 5.

by God himſelf: But labour to contract the number of abſents to the ſmalleſt quantity poſſible, and let Servants take their turns, that none may be alway at home; leave none behind thee without neceſſary and urgent cauſe. As for ſuch as can be preſent at Ordinances, remember to examine them of what they heard, as our bleſſed Lord the grand pattern of our Imitation dealt by his beloved Diſciples, when he had preached
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Ariſt. Ethic. l. 8. c. 6.

Id in Rhet. l. 2. c. 12.

Prov. 29. 17.

Seneca de iras, l. 1. c. 15.

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Pſal. 103. 9.

Rom. 13. 3.

Mat. 25. 21.

Hier. ad Læt. p. 55.

can bear no great ſails; pride and arrogancy are many times nurſt up by too exuberant and laviſh expreſſions, and ſometimes an unmannerly familiarity appears.

11. Do they flouriſh and thrive in duty and obedience, and begin to take in precepts freely and kindly? then win them on further by rewards, according to their ſeveral capacities, and the quality of their own eſtate. God is pleaſed moſt graciouſly to draw and allure us on in the ways of holineſs, by the propoſal of reward: *He is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* I remember that *Jerom*, as to the green years of *Pacatula*, wiſhes her father to uſe theſe means, [*Proponatur ei criſtula, mulſa præmia, & quicquid guſtu eſt, quod vernat in floribus, quod rutilat in gemmis, quod blanditur in puppis, acceptura feſtinet*, &c. *Pſalmos mercede decantet*], give her ſweet meats, flowers, jewels, babies, to intice her to learn the Pſalms. As to years of further growth, ſuch rewards as become them may be more proper. In ſome caſes theſe have proved great ſpurs and incitations, at leaſt to the outward work of Religion in younger ones. *Hannah* that good Woman brought up a little Coat every year to her Son *Samuel*, when he was in the ſervice of the Lord at the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, under *Eli*. And you know the Father of the Prodigal in the Parable, when his Son returned home to lead a new life, he killed a fatted Calf for him, put the beſt robe upon his back, a ring upon his hand, and ſhooes upon his feet.

Heb 11. 6. *Hieron. Tom.* p. 104. 1 Sam. 2. 19.

12. In the laſt place, be exceeding conſcientious and cautelous in diſpoſing them abroad, when either their education or profeſſion requires it. As to the Schools, when young and tender, chuſe out ſuch Guides and Maſters as may edifie them, and imprint ſomething more of God upon their hearts. It is a great fault in many that take up any neighbour-ſchool, where are ſuch profane and wicked children, ſuch as have learnt of their parents to ſwear, and take Gods Name in vain: Many times little youths gather a great deal of filth, and ſoyl, and pollutions in ſuch places, that ſticks by them many years after. It is a good work [ἀπελαύνειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀκοσμάτων καὶ τῶν ὁρεμάτων ἀνελευθερίας] to prohibit and keep them off from all illiberal and ſordid ſpeeches and ſpectacles. There was it ſeems a great crew of naughty children at *Bethel*, in the days of *Elijah*, that mockt the Prophet; a place that was a Seminary and Nurſery for young ones in knowledg. Oh how ſad is it for children that have been diligently taught at home in the fear of God, to unlearn all in wicked ſchools! Have a great eye to this, and eſpecially if they be ſuch as are deſigned for Academical learning, that they may be placed under godly Tutors at the Univerſity; or if for Trades, or other mechanical myſteries, that you chuſe out the bleſſed ſhadow of a godly Maſter and Miſtreſs, that may rivet and clench the nail that thou haſt knockt in. Great will be thy comfort in this, if thou ſoughteſt more a pious family, than a great and rich Trade. A family wherein ſhips go to Heaven, and a Trade is driven to *Canaan*. But eſpecially in the grand concernment of Marriage, that they match into a godly family, in whoſe veins the blood of the Covenant doth run. An Heireſs of the Divine Promiſes

Luk. 15. 22. *Ariſt. Pol.* l. 7. c. 17. 2 King. 2. 23. 2 King. 2. 3.

Promiſes is a greater match than an Empreſs of the whole world. He that hath but one foot of Land in Mount *Zion*, is richer than he that holds a Scepter over the round Globe.

I come now to the ſecond branch of this Queſtion, and that is,

Queſt. 2. *By what means we may attain our deſires, in reference to a good work in the hearts of thoſe that are our equals, whether of conſanguinity affinity, or neighbourhood?*

Anſw. As to this, I ſhall only propoſe two particular Rules, which I cannot now handle largely.

1. Be diligent in private conference and admonition, as the providence of God ſhall adminiſter ſeaſonable occaſions. *Give attendance to exhortation. Exhorting one another:* Lay before them the weighty and momentous matters of Eternity, and another world. Such things will make deep wounds to be cured in time by the hand of Heaven. Be ſhort and nervous, and lead them off from Carnal diſcourſe by ſome ſweet and heavenly diverſions. 1 Tim. 4. 13. Heb. 10. 25.

2. Manage your Reproofs with great prudence and diſcretion: *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* I might here divert into a caſe almoſt co-incident, and that is, Rev. 19. 17.

Queſt. *When is it our duty to reprove ſuch as we ſee and hear committing of ſin as we paſs by in the ſtreets?*

Anſw. This being the buſineſs of another ſubject, I ſhall only ſay thus much, that if thou perceiveſt them by their haughty and ſcornful carriage to be ſuch as will kick at rebuke, thou haſt a rule from *Solomon: Reprove not a ſcorner, leſt he hate thee.* When by the wiſeſt conjecture that thou canſt make, he is like to ſhew the properties of a brutiſh, ſwiniſh nature, *Caſt not thy Pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* But if he be a perſon likely to receive impreſſions, and particularly if it be a treſpaſs againſt thy ſelf, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he ſhall hear thee, thou haſt gained thy Brother. Debate thy cauſe with thy neighbour himſelf, *Prov.* 25. 9. I have known admirable ſucceſs in this caſe. But in all ſuch caſes obſerve theſe three Directions. Prov. 9. 8. Mat. 7. 6. Mat. 18. 17.

1. Time your Reproof ſeaſonably; Words ſpoken in ſeaſon are like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver. [αὐτὸ τοῦτο μάλιστα φιλοσοφίας ἴδιον, τὸ, καιρὸν ἑκάστων ἐπίστασθαι]. This very point (ſays an antient) is proper to a Philoſopher to underſtand the ſeaſon of all things. I may ſay, 'tis much more the excellency of a Chriſtian to feel the pulſe of the ſoul, and hit the diſeaſe in the very joynt; as 'tis reported of *Galen*, that when *Antonius* laboured under a diſtemper, others not being able to declare where it lay, this Phyſitian by his expertneſs in the evidence of Symptomes, pronounced that his ſtomach was vexed with crudities and indigeſtion: The Emperor cried out three times [αὐτὸ ἔστιν, αὐτὸ τοῦτο, ὃ εἶπες, ἔστιν] That's it, that very thing is it, which thou haſt ſpoken. As to our purpoſe, it is adviſable, ſometimes, not preſently and immediately to fall bluntly upon the work, leſt thou thy ſelf ſhouldeſt be- Prov. 25. 11. *Dialog. Laert. in Arceſilao.* *Caſtellan. de vit. medic.* p. 117.

be in a paſſion. Yet ſtay not too long, leſt thy holy zeal be cooled, and both thou and he forget or diſſemble the Circumſtances, whereby reproof might be the better fixed. A ſeaſonable time to intermeddle in theſe caſes may be when a friend is under the holy hand of God in any affliction, particularly in a ſick-bed. That time which is fit for bodily, may be much more fit for ſoul-phyſick. When thoughts of mortality, and the leaving off all outward enjoyments do prepare and meliorate the way for ſpiritual impreſſions.

2. Mix thy reproofs with meek and gentle Expreſſions. Every reproof ſhould be like the *Syrupus Acetoſus* of Phyſicians, the Syrup of Vinegar, that carries with it a grateful ſharpneſs. Take heed thou go not to this work veſted in thine own anger; for though there may be in thee ſome holy zeal, yet take heed of mingling too much of kitchen-fire. Meek reproofs are like Tents dipt in the Balm of *Gilead*, that both
Pſal. 141. 5. ſearch and cure the wound together. *Let the Righteous ſmite me*, (ſays *David*) *and it ſhall be a kindneſs; and let him reprove me, it ſhall be*
Luk. 10. 34. *an excellent oyl, which ſhall not break my head.* Such are the Diſciples of the good *Samaritan*, who poured in wine as an abſterſive, and oyl as a ſuppling incarnative into the wound. Such are the children of that
Prov. 31. 26. prudent Matron, *who opened her mouth in wiſdom, and in whoſe tongue was the Law of kindneſs.* And yet, friends, if we be over-gentle, the core of the wound will remain. The Chyrurgeon, who hath taught his Fingers too much tenderneſs, and not willing to put his Patient to pain, may, through cruel kindneſs, occaſion diſtorted limbs and lameneſs all a mans life. Corroſives are as neceſſary as gluttinous plaiſters, to eat down the proud Fleſh of our ſinful ſores. *Eli*'s ſinful mildneſs procured the ſharp ſword of the *Philiſtines*, to cut off his Sons, and occaſioned ſuch diſmal events, that broke his own heart, and his neck too. In many Chymical operations, Salt is a moſt neceſſary ingredient, and cauſes things to ferment; without the Salt of reproof in its due proportion, bare words of advice will ſeldom work. The temper of the perſon muſt be wiſely conſidered. In ſome, too mild expreſſions lull them aſleep in ſin. No great matter (may they think) which extorts but ſuch gentle reflections. In others, that are quick and apprehenſive, *Soft words*
Prov. 15. 1. *do pacifie wrath.* Such as are of cholerick tempers, whoſe gall doth much overflow their inteſtines, Phyſicians are more careful (of their *Cholagoga*) of ſuch ingredients in their Purges, that may exonerate, and not augment their choler. In all thy ſpiritual Phyſick labour to clear it up, that thou giveſt no potion but what may tend to the health of his ſoul.

3. Be ſure thou be unblamable as to that which thou reproveſt in another. If thou doeſt the ſame things, for which thou rebukeſt thy Bro-
Rom. 1. 2. ther, *thou art inexcuſable, for wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thy ſelf.* He may well retort the Proverb upon thee, Phyſician heal thy
Luk. 6. 42. ſelf. *Caſt out firſt the beam in thine own eye, and then ſhalt thou ſee clearly*
Arrian. in Epictet. l. 4. c. 6. *to pull out the mote that is in thy Brothers eye.* This is the firſt and principal work [σαυτὸν πῶς ἔχεις σκόπει, ἆρα μοι νῦν ἐπιχειρεῖς σοφὸν τοὺς ἄλλους]

to

to perſwade thy ſelf. Doeſt thou attempt to perſwade others to that, whereunto thou art not arrived thy ſelf? O vain man! who will believe that thou art in good earneſt, *that thou doeſt* indeed *abhor Idols, whenas thou committeſt Sacriledge?* Rom. 2.

Object. But ſome may object, *Shall we never reprove others in any caſe, till we are clear our ſelves? then who can perform this duty?*

Anſw. I anſwer: As to ſcandalous ſins, and ſuch as groſly foul the converſation, a man through Grace may keep himſelf unſpotted from the world. But in matters of infirmity, who can ſay that his heart or his life is free and clean? In the former, when thou haſt waſhed thy hands in innocency, then mayeſt thou deal with thy Brother. In the latter, ſince in many things we offend all, involve thy ſelf in the ſame reproof, and it may be digeſted the more kindly. James 1. 27. James. 3. 2.

I come now to the third and laſt branch of the Queſtion, and that is,

Queſt. 3. *How ſhall we deal with Superiours in caſe ſuch are in the ſtate of Nature? By what means may we moſt effectually promote their converſion?*

1. Here I might inlarge by way of Preface, to ſhew that it is lawful in ſome caſes for Inferiours to deal with Superiours, though it be the moſt difficult task.

2. That it is not only lawful, but ſometimes neceſſary. For it may ſo fall out, that in a whole family there may be but one child, or one ſervant that truly fears God, as it was with *Joſeph* in the houſe of *Potiphar*. What ſhall ne do, that would fain win a Father, a Maſter, or any other Superiour unto God? As to this, I ſhall give in but two directions at preſent.

A. 1. Exhibit thy counſel, advice, or reproof, under the vails of ſimilitudes, examples, or hiſtories. *Diogenes Laert.* in the life of *Zeno* acquaints us [εἰδὲ τίνα ὀπικόπλοι, πεπεισαλμένως καὶ οὐκ ἄδην, ἀλλὰ πόρρωθεν] that if he did reprehend any, he did it ſuccinctly, not profuſely, but *at ſome diſtance*. It is a good Rule as to Superiors. It is an elegant and a profitable way for managing this neceſſary duty, though uſually ineffectual and ſucceſsleſs, for want of vigilant circumſpection and prudence. If thy Father be ungodly and unholy, recite ſome hiſtory out of the Bible, or out of Church writers, that may have a ſweet reflection upon thy Fathers way. Sometimes Parables and Proverbial ſpeeches that are modeſt and ſober, may hit the joint. He may vouchſafe to behold his face in the glaſs, who would ſtorm at direct reproof. Parents many times when they are hit thus meekly and modeſtly, if they be wiſe, will ſeem to take no notice, but may ponder upon it a great while after. As our Lord when he told his Parents that he was about his Fathers buſineſs, the Text ſays, that *Mary kept all thoſe ſayings in her heart*. This is drawing the Bow, as it may ſeem to the ſuperiour, many times at an adventure; yet may thine Arrow hap to pierce even within the joynts of the harneſs. Parables are feigned examples, and are [ὅμοια ἐπαγωγή] near a kin to Inductions. Such was *Diog. Laert. in Zeno*, p. 445. *Edit. Genev.* 1615. Luk. 2. 58. *Ariſt. Rhet. l.* 2. *c.* 20.

Judg. 9. 7 &c. 2 Sam. 12. 1. &c. was the great wiſdom of *Æſop* and *Steſichorus* in their days, as the Philoſopher notes. Such was the Parable of *Jotham* to the men of *Shechem*. Thus *Nathan* dealt with *David*, and our bleſſed Lord himſelf, after this manner many times handled the High-prieſts and Rulers of the people; he reproved them ſometimes in dark ſentences, and choſen Parables. But if Superiours be over-moroſe, and exceeding ſagacious, and highly ma-

2 Theſ. 3. 14. giſterial, then a diſapproving ſilence, a diſ-reliſhing look, as ſpeedy a departure out of their preſence, as may ſtand with the neceſſary detenti-

Epictet. c. 54. ons of thy duty [ἀποσιωπῆσαι, καὶ ἐρυθριάσαι καὶ σκυθρωπῆσαι δῦλον γένε δυχιέρσίνειν τῷ λύγῳ], a holy bluſh for them that are ſhameleſs in ſin, may do greater things than thou art aware of.

2. Manage all your diſcourſes with reverent expreſſions and compella-

Diog. Laert. in Platon. p. 245. tions. If it be a great part of common humanity [προσαγορεύειν καὶ χαιεντίζειν] to ſalute courteouſly thoſe that we meet: what dexterous affability, and moſt ſweet lowly demeanour ſhould we exert and put forth to thoſe above us? *Paul* in his conference with *Porcius Feſtus* ſalutes him

Act. 26. 25. with great reſpect, *Moſt Noble Feſtus*, I ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs. Grace expells not the due diſtance of Nature. *Rebuke not*

1 Tim. 5. 1. *an Elder*, ſays the Apoſtle, *but intreat him as a Father*, that he may ſee thou deſireſt and longeſt, that he may be begotten to God. Mark how *Naamans* ſervants treated their Maſter, with what ſubmiſſive reverence did they beſpeak him, in that matter of his waſhing in *Jor-*

2 King 5. 13. *dan*; *My Father*, If the Prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldeſt thou not have done it, *&c?* *Abraham* hearkened you know to

Gen. 21. 12. the voice of his Wife, at the command of God, in the caſe of *Hagar*,

1 Pet. 3. 6. and the Spirit of God takes notice of the temper of *Sarah*, and commends her for it, that ſhe called her Husband *Lord*. And that I may give an inſtance in all three relations, if we conſult the circumſtances of the Text we ſhall find it probable, that *Terah* the Father, hearkened to *Abraham*

Gen. 11. 31. & 12. 1. his Son, as to his departure out of an *Idolatrous* Countrey. For the voice of God came to *Abraham* alone, bidding him to go out of *Ur* of the

Joſh. 24. 2. *Chaldees*, to a land that he would ſhew him. *Nebuchadnezzar*, that great and mighty Monarch, did not reject that pious and ſavoury counſel

Dan. 4. 27. which was given him by *Daniel* his captive-ſervant within his Palace.

Job 31. 13. *Job* likewiſe a man of great poſſeſſions in the Eaſt, *did not diſpiſe the cauſe of his Man-ſervant or his Maid-ſervant, when they contended with him.* Humble, modeſt, and reverent behaviour may have notable influ-

Senec. de Benef. l. 3. c. 35. ence into Superiours. It is controverted by *Seneca*, whether or no a child may not heap greater benefits upon a Father, than he had received from him. It may be clearly ſtated in the affirmative, if he ſhould be a means of turning him unto God. The Father begets his Son to a miſerable and mortal life: The Son begets his Father to that life which is Glorious and Eternal.

There remain yet four general Directions reſpecting all Relations.——

1. Inſinuate thy ſelf into their affections. Let them know, that thou haſt no deſign upon them, but to make them happy. Indeavour to perſwade them that thou haſt no private end, only their everlaſting good.

Wind

Wind into their hearts, ſcrew thy ſelf into their affections, and thou haſt done half thy work. [ὁ δ' ἔρως ἐδένι ἴσος πολεμῷ ὡς ἀναγκη ϗ νέκ] Nothing ſo inimical to love, as fear and neceſſity. When all jealouſies of any ſiniſter ends are blown away, then exhortations and counſels go down comfortably. When perſons are convinced and ſatisfied that in all our Applications we ſtudy their benefit and profit, this opens an effectual door to all the means that we ſhall uſe. Thus the Apoſtle accoſts the *Romans*, *I long to ſee you, that I may impart unto you ſome ſpiritual gift.* Thus he facilitates his way to the *Philippians*, God is my record, *how greatly I long after you all, in the bowels of Jeſus Chriſt*, [τὸς τὸ δοκῶν συμφέρον ποιέζοντας ἐκείνος ϗ τιμῶν ϗ σέβειν περὶ πλείν] we do even naturally reſpect and reverence ſuch as bring that which appears profitable to us; eſpecially when Superiors carry themſelves with courteouſneſs and kinnneſs. For moſt men delight to be honoured and eſteemed by them that are above them, [διὰ τὴν ἐλπίδα] for the hope that they conceive of ſome ſpecial profit to be received from them. The caſe varies not in ſpiritual matters. Labour then to gain their love, their good eſteem, and the work will thrive beyond expectation. *Max. Tyr. diſſ.* 10. *Simplicius in Epictet. c.* 38. *p.* 217. *Edit. Salm.* *Ariſt. Ethic. l.* 8. *c.* 8.

2. Study to convince them by rational Arguments [ἡ πειθὼ συζυγία ἔρωτος ϗ λόγυ] Perſwaſion is the daughter of love and reaſon. Our affections indeed moſt times are firſt wrought upon, we are ſo ſenſual by nature. When thou art once gotten into their hearts, then preſs them with weighty Arguments drawn out of Scripture; argue with them about the folly of ſin. See how *Job* handles the matter with his wife about murmuring and impatience againſt God: *What? ſhall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil?* Let them know that all the ways of God are pleaſant ways, and all his paths are peace. That the path to heaven is a moſt ſweet path to walk in. Shew them the beauty of Chriſt, the glory of Chriſt, draw aſide the curtain, and unvail the myſteries of free-grace before their eyes. Let them behold the image of that bleſſed Saviour pourtrayed in Scripture. As the ſpouſe did to the Daughter of *Jeruſalem*, run over all the excellencies of Chriſt, and then conclude, *He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O Daughters of Jeruſalem.* Tell them what experience you had of the blindneſs, nakedneſs, miſerableneſs of your own condition formerly, when you were as they are now; that you then thought of Religion, as they do; that it was but a peeviſh, fooliſh, unneceſſary ſtrictneſs. Tell them how the caſe is mended with you; how admirably through mercy 'tis altered. *Max. Tyr. diſſ.* 10. Job 2. 10. Prov. 3. 17. Cant. 5. 16.

3. Let your converſation be very exemplary; ſo that what you perſwade, may be ſtrongly confirmed by your own example. Both vice and vertue are learned by Preſidents. *Alexander* in his manners and gate did imitate his Maſter *Leonides*, as long as he lived. [*Nihil in te & in patre ſuo videat, quod ſi fecerit peccet.*] Let thy child behold nothing in thy walking, which, if followed, may prove ſinful. Be an example to others of holineſs, that they may not offend by the authority of thy Name. Though thy precepts be ſhort and conciſe, let thine actions, exemplifying thoſe precepts, be conſtant and perpetual. Deny your ſelves ſometimes in the injoyment of lawful things, which may not be expedient before Carnal Relations, when you are upon *Hieron. ad. p.* 56, 57. *Id. P.* 101. *Max. Tyr. diſſ.* 15.

1 Pet. 3. 1, 2. this work. Let *Wives*, ſays the Apoſtle *Peter*, *win* their Hus bands by *their* holy *converſation*. Walk ſo meekly, ſo obediently, ſo winningly by an amiable deportment, that a wicked drunken husband may ſee the picture of grace
1 Cor. 7. 16. in the life of a wife, and may be forced to confeſs, that grace of a truth dwelleth in her. Many times the unbelieving husband may be ſaved, even in
Pſal. 101. 2. this ſenſe by the believing wife, *& vice verſa*. *David* profeſt that he would *walk in his houſe with a perfect heart*. As the water follows the finger in the clay: ſo may thy example lead them on to the things of God. There is a ſecret reverence and awe upon the hearts of others, when any in the Family do walk worthy of the Goſpel unto all well-pleaſing.

Fourthly and laſtly, After thou haſt uſed all theſe fore-mentioned directions (which lye couched in the bowels of theſe words in the Text, [*my hearts deſire is, that Iſrael may be ſaved*] For if he did heartily deſire their good, as he profeſt, then he would uſe all good means proper and proportionable to that end. But then he adds *his prayer to God* for the ſame purpoſe, and ſo muſt thou) follow the example of our holy Apoſtle: Alas, all thy inſtructions without prayer will do no good. Go to God to ſanctifie all, and to perſwade their ſouls that you have a moſt ſingle and ſincere aim at their everlaſting Salvation. Pray apart for them; and if the condition of thy Relations will admit, pray with them, and therein touch ſome ſweet reflections upon their ſouls. *Elijah* when he was in prayer with company, cries out,
1 King. 18. 37. *O Lord hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God.* Our
Joh. 17. 18. & 18. 1. bleſſed Lord alſo in that heavenly prayer to the Father, makes moſt ſweet and ardent mention of his Diſciples who were preſent with him. *Job*, he
Job. 1. 5. ſacrificed for his children, he ſent for them, and ſanctified them, and *offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all*: To teach us to pray for
Gen. 17. 11. children diſtinctly one by one. *Abraham* he begs of God, *Oh that Iſhmael*
Prov. 31. 2. *may live in thy ſight*; and *Bathſheba* ſhe calls *Solomon the Son of her vows*. *Au-*
Judg. 13. 8. *ſtin* was the child of *Monica*'s prayers and tears. Ask counſel of God as *Manoah* did, that he would be pleaſed *to teach you* what you muſt do with your children. Beg of God wiſdom and direction, that he would order providential ſeaſons for their good: let that be your great requeſt in ſecret: Oh that
Jude 23. ſuch a child, ſuch a ſervant, might be *pull'd* as a fire-brand *out of the fire*, and brought home to God. Should you have the wiſdom of Angels, if God do not come in to your help, all your labour will be in vain. Cry out with the
Mat. 17. 15. poor man in the Goſpel, *Lord, have mercy on my Son, for he is ſore vexed: for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water*; ſome times into one ſin, ſometimes into another; whereby his ſoul incurs fearful and terrible dangers. Commend thy child to God, whom thou haſt begotten to death and damnation, unleſs wonderful mercy interpoſe it ſelf. Sprinkle him with the holy water of melting tears, beg of God that he may be delivered from the wrath to come by his Almighty arm. Petition earneſtly for the pardon of thoſe ſins, for the rooting out that ſpiritual wickedneſs, which thou haſt been the means to propagate. Pray it out, faſt it out, weep it out before God. Such Devils go not out without faſting and prayer.

Now I ſhall make ſome brief Application of the whole, and ſo conclude.

Uſe 1. In the firſt place, hence we learn the diffuſive nature of holineſs:

it

it is like the *widows oyl*, that filled all the veſſels of her neighbours. He that is holy, is θεοειδὴς, like unto God himſelf for communicativeneſs, as well as for purity, in his ſmall degree and meaſure: The language of a Saint is, *Come, let us* ſing praiſe, *let us* come before his preſence with thankſgiving; *Come ye*, and *let us* go up to the Mountains of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of *Jacob*, and he will teach us of his ways, *&c.* 2 Kings 4. 3. Pſal. 95. 1, 2. Iſa. 2. 3.

Uſe 2. To reprove ſuch as do not perform their utmoſt, that do not improve their skill and endeavour to the height in this excellent work. Every child is born an heir of Hell, and wilt thou uſe no means to deliver his ſoul from death, and to pull him out of the jaws of the Devil; Oh thou ungodly Father, that like *Gallio*, takeſt no care in this matter; God will require the blood of thy child, and the blood of thy ſervant at thy hands one day. Doſt thou love thy child? a Heathen will teach thee thy duty! To love, ſaith he, is [βέλτιστα ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὸ κατὰ δύναμιν πρακτικὸν εἶναι,] to deſire good things for ſuch, and according to the utmoſt ability to endeavour to accompliſh them. There is but one good thing that is abſolutely neceſſary for thy child, and that is, a happy union to God. What haſt thou yet done to the effecting of that? Many are eagerly bent upon thoſe deſigns, how their children, like *Caligula* in the Hiſtorian, may tumble in a room full of gold, but take little pains for the gold of *Ophir*, and that *wiſdom* which is *far above Rubies*. Know, that all the ſins of Relations under your charge that are not reproved and corrected for, will become yours. Every drunken fit of thy ſervant will be counted thine to anſwer for. Every turn of pleaſure that thy children and ſervants take in the fields upon Gods holy-day, with thy approving connivance, will turn to thy account at the great Tribunal. If thou wouldſt find favour with God, labour to divert them from the ways that lead to the chambers of death. He that neglects his duty herein, does what in him lyes to damn his child and himſelf too: As if he were in league with death, in covenant with Satan, and with Hell were at an agreement; as if it were a laughing matter for himſelf, and all his Relations to fall into the bottomleſs pit of fire and brimſtone. Oh how many Families are the filthy cages of unclean birds, like ſo many hog-ſtyes and ſinks of all manner of abominations! We can ſcarce walk the ſtreets, but we ſhall hear ſwearing and curſing, and polluting Gods holy Name, and many obſcene and filthy ſpeeches, and ſee great wickedneſs committed, even by young ſtriplings; and this is becauſe they are not inſtructed and taught the fear of the Lord at home by their Parents and Rulers. There be many ruffling Gallants in our times, that look upon holineſs as a crime, and count it their bravery to go towards Hell with open mouth, with a full ſwinge; that ſwim down the Rivers of Riot and Luxury into the dead Sea. That are ſo far from reproving others for ſin, that they commend and incourage them rather; that have much ado to bear with ſervants that perform excellent ſervice, if they will not drink healths, and be debaucht as well as themſelves, more like *Nero* than *Chriſtians*. If their children ſerve Satan never ſo much, they matter it not, ſo they do not ruin their Patrimony. No wonder that their children be profligate and vile, that have ſuch ſad Examples. The Spirit of God takes notice, that *Ahaziah* was a wicked man, and gives this for the reaſon: His Mother was his counſellor *Ariſt. Ethic. l. 2. c. 4.* *Sutton. in Caligula. c. 42.* Prov. 3. 14, 15. Iſa. 58. 13. 2 Pet. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 4. 4. *Sueton. in Nerone. c. 5.* 2 Chron. 22. 3.

ſellor to do wickedly. Such as will be angry rather, if their Relations do not walk in the ways of ſin, like the Waſps, in the Naturaliſt, that dip their ſtings in the poyſon of Vipers. Their angry tongues are tinctured in the venome of ſin. Oh how much good might a *Theophilus* do! when greatneſs and holineſs run in a blood, how would the Generations to come riſe up and bleſs them? how much honour might they bring to God? how would Religion flouriſh? how would our fields bring forth peace, and our ſtreets run down with Rivers of righteouſneſs?

Ælian. de animal. l. 5. c. 16.

Rom. 3. 13.

3. Hence we learn the horrible ſin of ſuch that cauſe others to do wickedly, that egg on others to the commiſſion of ſin, that encourage children to prophane the Sabbath, to lye, and ſwear, and ſeem to approve of, delight, and rejoyce in it: *Who knowing the judgment of God (that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death) not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.*

Rom. 1. 32.

4. Hence we may infer, what great wiſdom is requiſite in managing thoſe means that are proper and uſeful in order to the Salvation of our Relations; what integrity of heart, what ſincerity, what holy contempt of the ſcorns of this wicked world. Doſt thou take upon thee the ſtudy of wiſdom, ſays the *Stoick*? prepare thy ſelf ſpeedily [ὡς καταγελασθησόμενος, to be laught to ſcorn] and expect that many ſhould mock at thee. How much greater is the depravation of mens hearts ſince the fall, in oppoſition to true holineſs? Many a bitter taunt and ſcoff muſt thou go under, but in wiſdom paſs it by, regard it not, you work for ſouls. One ſoul begotten to God, is better than the gaining of whole Kingdoms and Empires.

Epictet. c. 29.

5. To ſuch as live under holy Rulers and Governours of Families, that you would highly eſteem them for their labour of love; that you would count it a ſingular mercy that God hath given any of you a holy Father, or a holy Mother, ſuch as have ſpent many an hour in ſecret for thy good, that have fought it earneſtly at the Throne of Grace, that thy life might be hid with God in Chriſt. Look upon their inſtructions as ſo many Pearls, their reproofs as ſo many Rubies to wear about thy Neck. Not to be reproved in the way of ſin is a great judgment. To have theſe thorns and briars caſt in the way to our ſinful lovers, is a great mercy. Oh, how many bleſſings do children enjoy by means of praying-parents? count it a great and an admirable favour from God.

Prov. 1. 9.

Hoſ. 2. 6.

6. To ſuch as are imployed and exerciſed in this excellent duty and ſtudy, to perform it conſcientiouſly. Who ſeriouſly endeavour, that their yokefellows may be the Spouſes of Chriſt, their poſterity the children of our heavenly Father, their ſervants the freemen of Chriſt, their kindred of the blood-royal of Heaven; Let me ſay as our bleſſed Lord to *Zacheus*, *This day is ſalvation come to this houſe.* This day haſt thou fellowſhip with the Father and with the Son. The God of Heaven goes along with thee. Though thou doſt not ſee the deſired fruit of thy labour at preſent, do not deſpond, the work is Gods. It is like to ſome of thoſe ſeeds which ſown in the Earth will not come up till the ſecond ſpring. The Husband-man *waiteth for the precious fruit* of the Earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. It is often ſeen, that there is a mighty power of God

Jam. 5. 7.

God going along with ſuch conſtant endeavours; at length the diligent hand may make thee rich. The grace that dwelt in the Grand-mother *Lois*, in the Mother *Eunice*, dwelt afterward in their little Son *Timothy*. Though God is not tied by any bond of nature, yet fervent prayer is of high eſteem in the ſight of God. The uſe of means directed by God, is a hopeful ſign of mercy intended: Where God chuſeth to the end, he ordains to the means. He hath choſen us to be holy, that we might be glorious. However God deal with you in that particular requeſt, yet be ſure your care and pains will not loſe a ſignal reward; your prayers ſhall return into your own boſom, and I tell thee, God watcheth over ſuch a Family in a way of mercy and peace. His Eye of Grace is toward thee; his holy hand will uphold thee, his heart will bleſs thee. Unto his good pleaſure commit thy ſelf, and wait the ſucceſs; go on and proſper thou bleſſed of the Lord.

2 Tim. 1. 5.

Eph. 1. 4. 11.

What

What are the Characters of a Souls ſincere love to Chriſt? And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

Eph. VI. 24.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.

Rom. 16. 24. 1 Cor. 16. 23, 24. Eph. 3. 14. Gal. 6. 18.

THeſe words may well be treated on without much Preface; there being nothing in them which ſpeaks any dependance upon, or connexion with any thing that went before. Some form of *Benediction* we find uſed by this Great Apoſtle at the concluſion of every Epiſtle; and accordingly having driven his excellent deſign in *this* to the Church of *Epheſus*, to a full period or iſſue; he firſt makes an affectionate addreſs to God, and to the Mediator in their behalf. *Verſe* 23, *Grace be to the Brethren, and love, with faith from God the Father, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; and then leaves his Apoſtolical benediction upon them, *Verſe* 24, *Grace be with all them, that love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity:* Or, The bleſſing of the Eternal God be upon all the ſincere hearted Chriſtians among you, for ſo I look upon the latter words of the *ver.* as a *Periphraſis* of all real Chriſtians; *Love to Chriſt being as eſſential to the Chriſtian, as the rational ſoul is to the man.* The only difficulty in the words, that will require our ſtay, is to enquire, what is meant [ἐν ἀφθαρσία] *in ſincerity*, ſome refer it to the [χάρις] *Grace* mentioned at the beginning of the *verſe*, as if it had been read [εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν] *unto Incorruption*, or to bring them to Eternal life, or until they come to a ſtate of Immortality. So many of the Antients, and of the Modern Interpreters *Beza*, *Tremellius*, and others.

Others read it, in Conjunction with the *love of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, making it a qualification, or a diſcriminating note of that love, which is *ſound, real, and ſincere*, from that which is but *pretended, counterfeit, and eaſie to be corrupted* by every difficulty and temptation: And accordingly they Tranſlate, ſome [*in corruptione*] others [*abſque*] a third ſort [*amore non vitiato nec cul-*

culpato.] All to the same sense with our *English* Translation, *In sincerity*.

There are others who consider this phrase apart by it self; some explaining it by *purity of heart and conversation*, others as denoting thereby the *duration of love* [*tam prosperis quam adversis,*] or both in good and bad times. *Piscator* makes it a distinct branch of the Apostles prayer; as if he had said, *Grace be with all them*, &c. *and life Eternal*: Taking no notice of the preposition that is added, and varies the Construction. 'Tis the conjecture of a *Learned Divine*, That the Apostle in adding this clause, hath some reflection on the *Gnosticks*, who had mingled themselves with the Christians at *Ephesus*, and were, whatever they pretended, neither pure in their love to Christ, having mixed his Doctrine with abominable corruptions; nor yet sincere and lasting therein, being ready upon every blast of persecution that did arise, to deny him, and Apostatize from him: I shall for the present with *Musculus*, leave the matter indifferent, not only which of the two first, but of all the other fore-mentioned Opinions is fixed upon, finding no cause so far as concerns my present purpose to be peremptory in either. The Apostle doubtless meaning none else *by lovers of Christ*, but such whose hearts were sincerely and intirely affected to him, whether he intended to characterize them any further by [ἢ ἀφθαρσία, *or no.*] Which, I presume, might easily be manifested from *other parallel* places (where this grace is mentioned and understood properly, having no additional qualification made thereto); and from the design of the words themselves, for certainly he would not so *solemnly* have intitled the rotten hearted Hypocrites, that did only pretend love to Christ, unto the *Benediction* of the great and blessed God. And if that stand good, we have enough for our purpose, and more need not be contended for.

1 Cor. 16.22. Joh. 14.15, 16 & 21. 15, 17. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

Let this suffice then for their meaning. The subject matter of them, whether you look to the first clause, or the last, is very noble, and might well deserve a large consideration; but I am confined to this single use of them, which is, to make them *the Foundation* of these two cases of Conscience,

What are the genuine Characters of a Souls sincere love to Christ? And how may that love to him be kindled and inflamed?

And there are but two or three things, that I desire to suggest, and then we shall immediately begin to treat upon them in their order.

1. Let it be considered, that there is a vast difference between these cases, and such other as do refer only to lower duties. When we inquire after the *sincerity of our love to Christ*, it's all one as if we were upon the search, whether we are *Christians*, yea or not; and whether consequently our portion doth lye in the Divine Promises or Threatnings: And what is our *immediate* duty, that all other set aside, we must attend unto. And again, when we seek for directions to help us unto the *love of Christ*, our inquiry is not, how we may order this or that inferiour action, but how we may attain to *saving Religion, and Christianity*; how we may escape the great Damning sin of the World, and intitle our selves to the love of God and Christ, and to all the *rare* priviledges which belong to the Communion of Saints. In a word, to the *Grace* of God here, and to *Eternal life* hereafter. See 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Jam.* 1. 12. and 2. 5. *John* 14. 21, 23.

2. Let

2. Let it be considered, That it is not the distinct resolution of these cases that will be of *final* advantage to any person, unless there be added to the former an impartial soul-searching examination of themselves; and to the latter, (as the case shall require) a conscientious practice. The resolutions given to cases of conscience about the right performance of duties, being nothing else, but the bare providing the food or physick: And again, the discoveries of mens states thereby, being but the presenting Looking-glasses to them; neither of which are effectual, or do any good, but to such as faithfully use them.

3. Let me humbly mind you, that the more *uncertainty* you are at, touching your estates, when you have examined them by the *Characters*, the more diligence you are concerned to use in the practice of the *Directions*. And let me add this, That where you cannot *undeniably*, and *demonstratively* conclude the sincerity of your love, (which I think few in comparison, on this side of Heaven can) there you must *never* lay by the advice about the last case; no not although your probabilities should be great, it being at the worst but an *easie and sweet trouble* to be still doing this great work over again; whereas its *irrecoverably dangerous and desperate*, upon presumption that we have done it already, to leave it wholly neglected: And I beseech you, remember this *useful Rule*, That in all trials, which Christians make about Grace, *It is safer to want credulity, than to be over hasty therein.*

The cases are two, and very fit to follow each other in the order that is given to them. I begin with the first,

What are the genuine Characters of a souls sincere love to Christ?

And in order to the Resolution thereof, I must premise these several Propositions.

1. *Proposition.*

That there is a great deal of difference between *Love* as it is seated in the *Will*, or *rational Appetite*, and the same Act or Principle of Love, as seated in the sensitive. In the former, it is a *setled, rational, uniform, and deliberate motion*, co-incident with the very natural act of the will it self: *To Love*, (as the great School-man notes) being nothing else but [*intensive velle*] *to will intensely*, either person or thing. The motion of the Will towards the Object, as good and desirable, and the earnest imbracing thereof, this is *rational Love*. And according to the various Aspect which it hath thereto, either as present or absent, perfect or imperfect, it is called *love of desire*, or *fruition, dependance*, or *complacency*: And if the Object be such, as can or doth *reciprocate* affection, then its friendship [or *Amor Amicitiæ*]. But now take *Love*, as it is an *Affection* properly so called, and seated in the lower faculties of the soul, and so there is a great variety and inequality in its motions, much easier to be felt, than expressed; sometimes the soul is in a kind of *extasie*, wrapt above it self; and then by and by it's flat and dull again. I note this first, for this reason, that you may understand what kind of love it is, that our inquiry doth proceed upon, *viz. Rational love*; it being (as a *Judicious Divine* hath often observed) not so safe for Christians to try their states by the passionate motions of Grace in the

Voluntas nihil aliud est, quam Intellectus extensus ad habendum & faciendum id, quod cognoscit. Scalig. *exercit.* 107.

Baxter's Directions for peace and comfort. *Direct.* 21.

the lower parts of the ſoul, or the affections, as by the more equal and uniform actings thereof in the will it ſelf; the [τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν] *commandreſs* of the ſoul.

2. *Propoſition.*

The Acts of the Will (*in ſpecie morali*) derive their *goodneſs or vitiouſneſs, partly* from the nature of the *object* upon which they are fixed. I do not aſſert this to be the *only* ground whence they are concluded *good or evil*; for *the principle and the end*, and ſometimes *the degree of the act*, are all neceſſary thereto, but only that this is *one thing* neceſſary. Thus the *willing of God*, or any of thoſe things which are in a direct order to his glory, is that we call *the Grace of Love:* As on the other ſide, when the Will moveth towards any thing which ſtandeth *in oppoſition* thereto, this is that we call *ſinful concupiſcence.*

3. *Propoſition.*

It is not barely the *Object* in *it ſelf* conſidered, but as cloathed with its proper excellencies, that agree to it, and all *its neceſſary relations*, which the *will* in its motions muſt have reſpect unto, before any of thoſe motions can *truly* be ſaid to be *gracious:* For the nature of Grace lies not in the act or *motion of the will ſimply* and nakedly conſidered, but as it's ſuited and proportioned to the excellencies of the object, and thoſe relations which do *inſeparably* belong thereto. For *inſtance, To delight in God*; It is not every act of delight, which the ſoul may have upon the apprehenſion of him; ſuch as a *bare Philoſophical conception* of God may ſometimes raiſe the heart unto; But when the *believing-ſoul*, having taken a view of the Excellencies of God, and its own ſweet relation to him as a *Graciom Father*, is carryed forth in a holy *rapture and exultancy* of ſpirit. This is *the Grace of delight.*

4. *Propoſition.*

Though *the love of God, and the love of Chriſt* are never found one without the other, yet is there a diſtinction *neceſſary* to be put between them; and that, even as great in proportion, as is between *God and the Mediator*, or between *the laſt thing, and the principal means conducing thereto.* The love of the ſoul to God, is [*Amor finis ultimi*, Or,] of ſuch a *Being* as it will be an Eternal happineſs *to be united unto.* The love of the ſoul to Chriſt, as Mediator, is [*Amor medii principalis*, Or] of one, by whom, we may have *acceſs* to God, and find our happineſs in him. The formal reaſon of the former, is the *Divine All-ſufficiency and bleſſedneſs*; but of the latter the perſonal excellencies that are in Chriſt, together with his *ability and willingneſs* to free us from our undoing ſtreights and exigencies, as we are in a ſtate of *Apoſtacy and elongation* from God. And (if I miſtake not) *the not obſerving this neceſſary diſtinction* between the acts of the ſoul, as reſpecting God, and the ſame acts [*in ſpecie*, or] in kind, as reſpecting the Mediator, hath occaſioned much confuſion in thoſe anſwers which are given to this and many ſuch like inquiries; ſuch Arguments as are only proper to the one,

being made use of to discover the sincerity of our hearts in the other.

5. *Proposition.*

Love, as it is an act or habit of the will, and hath Christ for its object, is not properly the Evangelical Grace of love to Christ, unless it have respect to him, according to the various excellencies of his person, and the several distinct Relations which are by God invested in him: Or thus, *The Gospel grace of love, is not the intensive willing a naked Christ, but Christ as represented with his peculiar personal excellencies, and with his various offices and relations unto us in the Gospel.* This proposition undeniably follows from the *third* before laid down: But yet, because it gives some *special light* to help us to discover the true nature of this grace; and is intended as the foundation of some of those Characters that will afterwards come to be insisted on, I must crave *your* patience, while I offer something farther for the confirmation thereof. That certainly it is no *true Moral act*, which is not suited to the *nature of the object:* Thus, for a man to love *his friend*, no otherwise than he *loves his beast*, would not be a true Moral act of love? And again, as plain a truth it is, that where the *act of love* doth not bear some *gradual proportion*, to the various excellencies of the object that it is conversant about; neither can that *act* have any *Moral truth or goodness* in it: For *instance*, to *love God, or Christ* with no higher love than we love inferiour persons, whether Friends, Relations, or Superiours in the world; This were not *sincerely* to love either of them, See 1 *Joh.* 2. 15. and *Mat.* 10. 37. and *Luke.* 14. 26.——I add in the last place, (which is no less evident than either of the former) that where there are *relations or offices necessarily* invested in, and inseparable from the person beloved, then if our love doth not respect the object, as under *those relations and offices*, it will be far from being love in sincerity. Some instances will clear this also beyond contradiction: Suppose a Woman that hath a Husband, and she loves him no otherwise than one friend loves another: And the case is the same, between a *Scholar and his Master, a Servant and his Lord, a Subject and his Prince.* If the affections be without reverence, obedience, and loyalty, will either of these be reputed true love? Why, no more are such to be accounted the sincere lovers of Christ, who do not bear *an affection to him in all offices and relations:* And this I take to be so demonstrative a truth, and of such necessary consideration in our present inquiry, that nothing could be *spoken in judgment* thereto, until we had first made our way unto it, and laid it down; I am sure it will be found *fundamental* to the right understanding the *Nature of sincere love to Christ*, and the greatest part of the Characters which are laid down in the Scripture of this grace. It might now be here expected, and it's almost necessary to give some account of Christs personal excellencies, and also of his offices, what they were, and briefly to intimate what new qualifications each of them would put upon Christians *Intensive willing* of Christ, which is but the [*Substratum*, or] matter of this grace;

grace; But I am not now to diſcourſe the nature of this grace at large; and ſo much thereof as is neceſſary, will come in, when we lay down ſome of the Characters of it, and I have but two things more, and then we come to them.

6. Propoſition.

The love of the ſoul to Chriſt in ſincerity, is not any *one Indiviſible act or habit*, but a *holy frame of ſpirit*, made up of *many gracious inclinations*, carrying the *whole* ſoul along with it *unto Chriſt, for union and communion with him.* I told you in the beginning, that it is uſed here by the Apoſtle as the *Periphraſis* of a *Chriſtian*, a *Brother*, a *real Saint*; and therefore it is not a *ſudden* and *tranſient flaſh* of the ſoul, or any *one* act, but comprehenſive of much of that, wherein the *nature of Chriſtianity* doth eſſentially lye. This follows neceſſarily from the laſt propoſition: And indeed to make *faith or love* to Chriſt, ſuch *ſingle Phyſical acts*, as many do, as it renders the *Doctrine* of Chriſtianity *perplexed*, ſo doth it exceedingly tend to the *amuſing* of the Conſcience of weak Chriſtians, and I am afraid, *ingender alſo to licentiouſneſs:* It being too uſual with ſuch perſons, who preſumptuouſly conceive themſelves to be Chriſtians, becauſe they diſcern, as they think, thoſe ſuppoſed particular acts, to take up with them, and to grow remiſs, and careleſs in other duties, as *eſſential to Chriſtianity*, and neceſſary to ſalvation, as thoſe graces themſelves. To conclude this propoſition, you may note, that as *love to God, is the ſoul of natural piety*, and is *incorporated into* every branch of it, ſo is *love to Chriſt the very ſpirit that diffuſeth it ſelf through*, and *animates all thoſe duties which are required by the New Covenant, and reſpect Jeſus Chriſt as Mediator.*

7. Propoſition.

When we inquire after this love, by it's *Genuine Characters*, you are not to underſtand thereby, only ſuch *ſpecial properties*, as argue the eſſence of this grace *a poſteriori*; but you are to know that we underſtand it in ſuch a latitude, as leaving room for all thoſe arguments by which the Conſcience of a Chriſtian may be reſolved whether this grace was ever truly wrought in his ſoul or not. And theſe things premiſed, the Characters which evidently diſcover, *whether we love Chriſt in ſincerity, are* theſe that follow.

1. Character.

We may know it by our former *Convictions*, and the Rule is this; *Where love to Chriſt is ſincere, there hath been a Conviction of the ſouls undone condition without him, and of the ſufficiency and willingneſs of Chriſt to recover the ſoul out of that condition*; And where-ever this Conviction hath been fully wrought, and the wound made thereby *Regularly healed*, there dwells ſincere love to him. I put this firſt, as containing the *original birth of Evangelical love.* I dare affirm, *No conviction, no love*; No contrition of heart for ſin, no affection in the ſoul for Chriſt: *Every degree of true Spiritual love* (ſaith a Divine, that had well ſtudied this point) *proceeds from a proportionable act of ſaving-faith.* And to the

Iſa. 55. 1. & 61. 1, 2, 3. Mat. 11. 28.

1 Pet. 2. 8.

ſame purpoſe (ſaith Dr. *Preſton*), and he preſſeth it earneſtly, two things muſt concur to beget love: 1. The ſight of Chriſts willingneſs, and readineſs to relieve. 2. His ability, and ſufficiency to help. Theſe two, willingneſs, and ability, are the *Crown upon the head of Chriſt*; when undone ſouls do firſt take delight in him, they are the *ſweet Oyntments of our Lord*, which by their *Savour* do attract *Virgin* ſouls to betroth themſelves unto him. What ever men may vainly talk, *'tis brokenneſs of heart, and a ſenſe of approaching ruin*, that gives the ſoul the firſt occaſion of acquainting it ſelf in *good earneſt* with Chriſt; and when Faith hath thereupon found the *ſuitableneſs of Chriſt* to it ſelf, in its preſent ſtate of miſery, then the fire of love begins to burn. So that it is not a blind, caſual paſſion, but a matter *of right reaſon*, mature judgment and choice. It is not a frame of ſpirit that perſons were delivered into they know now how; but ſuch, whereof they that have it, can give undeniable reaſons: ſo that if the queſtion were put to any love-ſick ſoul, as to the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, *chap.* 5. 9, 10, *What is thy beloved more than another beloved?* She could give an account, if not ſo *Gloſſie and Rhetorical*, yet *as Logical and Rational* as that which is there given. She hath ſeen that in Chriſt, ſo much *Excellency* in his perſon, and ſo much *readineſs and ſufficiency*, as reſulting from his ſeveral offices, which hath even raviſhed her, and made *him comely to her for delights, yea, the very chiefeſt of ten thouſands:* and therefore ſhe both can, and doth claſp faſt about him, and takes him for her *Phyſitian*, *Husband*, *King*, *Prieſt*, *and Prophet*; Since he is willing and *fit to be* my Saviour, (oh! ſaith the ſoul) I will be his *Diſciple*, *Servant*, *Subject*, *or any thing*; Thus he can hold no longer, but falls down-right ſick of love. And this is the firſt Character. Take it now, and ask thy ſoul; *Didſt thou ever yet find thy ſelf* loſt and undone? not able to bear up againſt the Terrours of an accuſing and condemning conſcience; even dying away for fear, leſt God ſhould *ſpend all his arrows* upon thee, and leave thee a *Horrour* to thy ſelf, and an amazement to all about thee? And was it in this *Dark Valley*, that thou cameſt firſt ſeriouſly acquainted with Chriſt? and didſt thou ſee his *bowels yearning to thee*, and that he was fully able to ſet thee in the *light of the Countenance of that God*, whoſe *Terrour was upon thee?* And under this conviction was it, that thou didſt firſt cloſe with him? why this is *love* not in *pretence*, and complement, *but in ſincerity:* Whereas on the other ſide, if thy pretended affection wants this foundation; if it hath been always alike, neither more, nor leſs; if that *ſenſeleſs conceit* runs through thy ſoul, that thou haſt *loved* Chriſt ever ſince thou waſt born, and never didſt feel the leaſt ſtirrings of Enmity againſt him; If *Education*, *Cuſtome*, *outward communion*, be all that thou haſt to ſay to prove thy love; in faithfulneſs to thy ſoul, I warn thee to take heed of ſelf-deceit, for ſurely *the Root of the matter is not in thee*; and if thou wilt ſtill preſume, notwithſtanding this confident denial, I have but one word more, and that is to commend to thy ſerious peruſal, that Judicious Tract of Mr. *Pinke*, on this very Caſe, and Text; where theſe counterfeit grounds of love are *fully convicted of Inſufficiency* and therefore I would not do it here again.

2. *Cha-*

Cant. 3. 11. Cant. 1. 3. Act. 2. 36, 37. & 9. 5, 6. Mat. 9. 12. Cant. 1. 3. 12. Chap. 2. 3. & 5. 10. & 2. 5. & 5. 4. Deut. 32. 23. Job 6. 4. Pſal. 38. 2. Jer. 31. 20. Acts 9. 5.

See *Reynolds*, on Pſal. 110. p. 59, 60, &c. Job 19. 28. *Tryal of a Chriſtians ſincere love to Chriſt.*

2. *Character.*

Where love to Christ dwells in Sincerity, there hath been some sensible *Impression, Taste, and Feeling of the Fathers love* to the soul in him: I do not mean, the Fathers love, as it lies in the *womb of Election,* but as it hath broken forth in a *powerful actual* Vocation. The pedigree of a Christians love to his Saviour, is to be fetcht from the Fathers love to souls in Christ. 1 *John* 4. 19, *We love him because he loved us first.* Christ himself as Mediator, is but *a means* whereby Souls may come to God their final end and blessedness; And therefore as the soul that loves him, loves the *blessed God* much more; so before we can fix upon him with full satisfaction, some *beams* thereof must light upon us, it being too great a difficulty for the soul, to prevail with it to trust all its concernments in the hands of a *Crucified Christ,* and to be found of him, until it hath gained some sweet assurance of the Fathers love to it self in him. And hence it is that our Saviour tells us, *John* 6. 44, *No man can come to him, except the Father that hath sent him, draw him.* By *coming to Christ,* I take it for granted, may be understood, either *Faith or Love*; And these cannot be without the Fathers drawing; what's that! morally, it lies in the clear discoveries of his willingness to be reconciled to us in Christ; when in Conformity to *his being in Christ reconciling the World to himself,* he is pleased to vouchsafe us his own beseechings of us to be reconciled, then he draws us. The promise therefore of reconciliation must first be made known, and by the sweet influence thereof, the soul is allured with Chearfulness to throw it self into the Arms of its Saviour: And this is love. Try by this also; Didst thou ever find those Cords of a man, those bonds of Divine and Ravishing love, thrown upon thee? Didst thou ever see God to be thy happiness, and offering himself to thee, as such, and so alluring thee? Then thou art Married to Christ, for this speaks thee *United to God in love,* and the end must include the means, and the greater the lesser.

Rom. 9. 13. Rom. 8. 30. Joh. 14. 6. Joh. 14. 9. & 15. 23. 2 Cor. 5. 20.

3. *Character.*

We then love Christ in Sincerity, when that *affection* in us is *qualified* according to the various Excellencies *that belong to the person of our Lord*; when it respects him, according to the manifestation made of him in the Gospel; *viz.* not simply as a person, who is *Historically* made known to us by such a Name; but according to the true Character of him, as *God and man in one person*; [θεάνθρωπος] as one filled with the *spirit of God above measure, by an infallible Unction*; as one admirably Condescending, and laying by his divine splendour and Majesty, that he might appear *in the form of a Servant, and be obedient to the death of the Cross,* for the Salvation of Sinners: and lastly, as one *raised from the dead by God,* made able, and declaring his high satisfaction in the access of sinners unto God by him; and so there are these four graces, which are always attendant upon, and are (as it were) *Incorporated* into the nature of this Evangelical affection. 1. *Humble and Reverent admiration*; 'Tis an *admiring Love.* Objects that are incomparably Excellent, do always

Joh. 3. 35. Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8. Acts 5. 30.

ways first affect with admiration; and though that affection dissolve into love, yet doth it not usually wholly cease, especially if the *object* be not throughly comprehended: 'Tis thus with thy soul (Christian) that art a sincere lover of thy Redeemer, and hast not set up some *Image of*
Cant. 5. 16. *an ordinary person* in the place of him: thou *admirest him* whom thou
Eph. 3. 17. lovest, as never being able to comprehend his Glory: The Lord whom
Joh. 1. 1, 14. thou lovest, being *God as well as Man*, and Man as well as God, and all
1 Tim. 3. 16. this, in one person: An object in whom Heaven and Earth are so *admirably blended* together, that the acutest reason loseth it self, and stands amazed at the Union: whence we find one of the Ancients thus speaking of it, *I know that the Word was made flesh; but how or in what manner*
Chrysostom. *this was done, I know not; Dost thou wonder that I profess my Ignorance? why, the whole Creation is Ignorant of it as well as I:* And another of them gives this advice; If reason go about to cavil [περόρας (ἐξολμην λύσιν)
Justin Mart. τὴν πίστιν] Do not dispute, but apply thy self to the common Refuge against cavils in matters of Faith, even *Faith it self:* God hath said it, and therefore I must and will believe it; These things considered, I dare boldly tell thee, that thou canst not love in sincerity, but together therewith thou wilt be under a holy *rapture* of Admiration; and together with thy love, thy Admiration will be always increasing.

Cant. 2. 3. 2. *Sweet and refreshing delight.* 'Tis a *delighting, rejoycing love:* love (saith *Aquinas*) [*est complacentia amantis in amato*] is the *rest and satisfaction* of the soul in the Object loved; the nature of love lies much in delight. Thou canst not (Christian) love thy Lord, but thou wilt find thy heart even ravished with delight in him, as being one in whom
Col. 2. 9. the *fulness of the Godhead dwells* [σωματικῶς, or] personally, [*non per efficaciam solum aut assistentiam, sed per Unionem Hypostaticam*, or] not virtually, or only in a way of *external* help and assistance; and being also
Davenant in locum. one that had such an *Unction of the Spirit upon him*, that hath fully fitted him for the delight of thy soul: And hence it is, that we find the
Cant. 4. 5. Spouse in the Book of *Canticles* so often letting forth her heart in holy delight to her Beloved, as is manifested by her many loving compellations, and several other expressions (*He shall lye all night betwixt my breasts*, Cant. 1. 13.) too large and many to be mentioned here, and therefore I refer you to the Book it self.

3. *Ingenuous gratitude and thankfulness.* 'Tis a grateful and *thankful love*; as that which is *begotten* in the soul by the sense of Christs unspeakable goodness and condescension, and which is also ever after *fed and maintained* thereby. Now the condescension of Christ lies in three things.

Rom. 5. 8. 1. In his *voluntary undertaking the work of Reconciliation*, and mediation with God for persons so unworthy, *Heb.* 2. 16, *He took not on him the nature of Angels, but the seed of Abraham*; it was the cause of sinners which this great Lord undertook to plead.

2. *In his unwearied diligence, and invincible patience* in fulfilling the *severe* Law of Redemption, which he had submitted to: Though the injury that was done him by man was so great and manifest, and the terror of the

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Lord againſt him alſo ſo ſevere and unſpeakable, *yet he opened not his mouth, but was dumb, even as a Lamb at the ſlaughter, and a Sheep under the hands of the Shearers,* Iſa. 53. 7. Matt. 11. 30.

3. *In being willing to communicate the benefits* purchaſed thereby to ſinful and rebellious men, upon ſuch *eaſie* terms; bidding us do nothing elſe but *turn to God by repentance*, and Self-denial, and believe in himſelf, and then what-ever our ſins had been, all the advantages *merited* by his death ſhould be made over to us. Now when all theſe are conſidered (as by every ſoul that ſincerely loves him, more or leſs they are) do they not ſweetly affect with thankfulneſs, as well as love? Chriſtian, canſt thou look upon *ſuch a Redeemer* without ſome ſenſe of an obligation laid upon thy ſoul thereby? wilt thou think one ſingle and ſeparate affection enough for him? or rather, will not thy heart empty it ſelf into the boſome of the Lord with love and thankfulneſs both at once, and each of them contending which ſhall out-do the other? Rom. 10. 8, 9, 10. Iſa. 1. 16, 17, 18.

4. *Supporting hope and confidence*; *'Tis a hoping and confiding love*; 'Tis not a languiſhing affection, but that which brings life into the ſoul from the fulneſs of that Chriſt it feeds upon. *Perfect love* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *caſteth out fear.* There will not be ſo much as *the ſhadow* of fear upon the ſoul, when this affection is ripened into perfect fruition: And in the mean time, as the degrees of it do increaſe, ſo is the ſoul heightned in its hopes, and tramples upon its former jealouſies, fear, and diſcouragements. And to this ſenſe ſome interpret thoſe words, *Rom.* 8. 38, 39, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt*, &c? As if they were the exultation of Faith upon the view of Loves Conqueſt, and victorious Triumph over all its enemies: Love gives confidence of acceſs to Chriſt, and unto God by him; and this confidence lies in the ſoul, as a cordial againſt all its faintings and diſpondencies; not that there may not be ſinking of ſpirits, and a *ſwooning away* for a time, but love will reſtore the ſoul again, and knowing Chriſt to *be good*, as well as *all ſufficient* for its condition, it will recover life and ſpirits again, and not ſuffer it utterly to faint under its own *ſad* apprehenſions. And this is the third Character. Take now all theſe four qualifications of ſincere love, and try your ſelves by them. 1 Joh. 4. 17. Cant. 6. 12, 13.

4. *Character.*

If our love be ſincere, its an affection which reſpecteth not a *naked Chriſt, but Chriſt as Mediator:* Or, it is a hearty deſire of, and complacency in Chriſt in all his Offices, as *King, and Prieſt, and Prophet:* And of ſuch moment is the right knowledg of this Character, that (Chriſtian) I muſt deſire thee principally to ſtudy it, and paſs a judgment upon thy ſelf thereby: For whatever *fondneſs*, and ſudden *flaſhings* of love thou mayeſt find within thee, they will not ſo clearly tell thee what thou art, as the knowledg of thy ſelf by this mark. Take it for a clear Truth, *That if thou loveſt not Chriſt as thy Soveraign Lord; if thy heart be not knit to him, as thy High-Prieſt with God; if thou haſt not affectionately entertained him as thy Maſter and Teacher: In a word, if thou art not conſecrated unto God by Chriſt; if thou art not a loyal ſubject, and a willing*

willing Disciple, love in sincerity doth not dwell in thee: Thou art still an enemy, and wilt be so judged; 'Tis not fondness of expression, nor any outward complement that men put upon Christ, which reacheth the *New Testament notion of love to Christ*, but when as loyal subjects, and willing
Joh. 14. 15, 21. & 15. 1. & 10. 21, 23, 24. 1 Joh. 5. 3. Luk. 19. 27. H. b. 10. 28. Joh. 14. 23, 24.
Disciples, we are always doing the things that are *grateful, and are obedient* to him: This is love. And hence it is, that in so many places, our Lord puts us upon trying our *love* by our *obedience*, by *keeping his words and Commandments*. And speaks of *Libertines, infidels, the carnally wise*, Rebels, and Apostates, as enemies, and haters of him, whatever their pretences are to the contrary. And verily, so essential is this to sincere love, that unless you understand it, you will be able to give but a lame account of most of the Scripture-Characters thereof (as if I had time, I could easily demonstrate) because they do all presuppose it. If thou wouldest know therefore whether this Grace be in thee in truth, take thy heart (Christian) to Christ in every office, and try by such *Interrogatories*, as may result from the consideration of them; and this will tell thee thy case distinctly. Begin *first* with Christ as High-priest (for this did lay the foundation of the other two offices; and if thou hast any love to Christ in sincerity, it was the sight of him in this that first kindled it). And thus bespeak thy self: Didst thou ever (oh my soul) seriously consider what Christ hath undertaken in thy behalf with the jealous God, whose face thou couldest not see, and live? wast thou ever convinced, that all thy prayers, duties, outward priviledges, and devotions were little worth, and could not have ought availed thee, unless
Heb. 10. 10, 12. 1 Cor. 2. 2.
by his own *blood he* had first *entred within the vail*, and made attonement for thee? And then with the same blood went afterwards *to the right hand of God*, and put him in mind of his Covenant, to procure actual Grace, and Peace, and Adoption for thee? And is it a pleasure to thee, as well as thy admiration, to be always musing, and searching what such an Abysse of grace and goodness should mean? And in the midst of thy musings was it, that thy affection first took his holy fire, and were even
Rom. 8. 34. Phil. 3. 7, 8.
surprized into love? Is it by his Mediation that thou findest thy expectations from God, and thy delight in him supported? And dost thou rejoyce in him, as one whose goodness thou adorest, and whose favour with God, purchased by his own merit, thou admirest? And therefore art most willing to trust all thy concernments in his hands? and in all
Cant. 8. 5.
thy addresses to God comest *leaning upon the arms of him*, as thy Beloved Mediatour and Intercessour? why thus to renounce our own righteousness, and to feel our hearts warmed into a further estimation of his; to attribute all our acceptance with God to him: Briefly, to be *intensively willing* of Christ, and to look upon him with full satisfaction of spirit in all his Priestly Administrations, This is *sincerely* to *love* Christ as our *High Priest*. And on the contrary, to undervalue his blood, either, as *needless by presumption*, or *as worthless by desperation*; to be ascribing to our selves, when we receive any kindness or favour from God; to doat upon our own worth, and righteousness, as that which is sufficient without either Christs Righteousness, Satisfaction or Intercession: This

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is interpretatively to reject him from being our *High-Priest*, and to hate the person of our Lord. Thus try your selves whether ye love Christ in his Priestly Office; and when you have done with that, take thy soul to the Prophetical Office; and make a further tryal, by bespeaking thy self after the same manner: Thus; Didst thou ever (oh my soul) seriously consider that thou wast made for an eternal life, and that none could ever chalk thee out the way thereto, it being only to be learnt in the School of this great Prophet? And thereupon hast thou wholly ceased from listening unto any other, and as a loving Disciple hast thou found pleasure in seeking the Law, (even the word of thy Salvation) at his mouth? Doth thy heart throughly savour his Doctrine? and dost thou like the Discipline of his School? Dost thou make it thy study to know, and lay it as a charge upon thy self, *to keep the words of* this great Master and Prophet? And even now, that he is gone to Heaven, and hath left his word in the Scripture behind him, and hath sent his Spirit, and set up under-Officers in his School, and precious Ordinances for thy guidance and direction; dost thou value the *Scriptures* above all other writings in the world? and witness thy esteem of them, by thy daily perusal, and study of them? dost thou bear a Reverence in thy breast to all Christs Offices and Institutions? Dost thou account *the mouth of Christ most sweet?* and even *delight* to hear his voice in the Scripture, and in every Ordinance? and when thou hast heard, dost thou lay up what thou hast been taught, as the faithful counsel of thy dearest Teacher, and rejoyce therein? More *particularly*, what is thy carriage towards his Spirit? dost thou hear when he calls? and art thou tractable to all his *Motions?* dost thou grieve him, or art thou willing to be instructed and guided by him? why, thus to cease from *leaning to our own understandings*, to give up our selves to Christ, and his Spirit in the Scriptures, and in all the Ordinances of the Gospel, to be serious and willing Disciples of Christ; This is to *love Christ as our Prophet* in sincerity. That is the second office. Once more to make the tryal by this mark compleat, and that will respect his Kingly office: And this is as easie, as either of the former; for our *loyalty and voluntary subjection to Christ*, as commanding, and governing, this is love; And the hearts rebellion against Christ, rejecting his dominion, murmuring against his Laws, finding fault with his administrations, disturbing his subjects, and disquieting the peace of his Kingdom, envying him the multitude of his subjects, and yielding no obedience to his commands; all these are several branches of enmity against Christ as King and Soveraign. Put the case therefore home to thy own soul, if thou wouldst not be mistaken, and say, Doth Christ rule within thee (oh my soul) or doth *self* and Satan? Art thou glad with his Soveraignty? or is it the Yoke thou canst not bear? do the Laws of his Kingdom bear sway within thee, or is it the *Law of thy members*, and carnal self? when both come in competition, whose command dost thou in the course of thy life most commonly fulfil? whose Kingdom art thou most delighted in the advancement of? Is it a pleasure to thee, that thy Lord doth reign, and that his *Throne* is more universally exalted? or else doth thy heart rise against the advancement of Christs Kingdom? In whom dost thou find thy greatest delight? Is it rather in the company of *Rebels*, that would pull the Crown

Heb. 10. 28.

Joh. 14. 23, 24.

Cant. 5. 16. Psal. 1. 2. Heb. 2. 1.

Rom. 6.

from the head of Christs, than in the *humble and obedient subjects* of thy Lord? dost thou take Christ to be thy *Prince and Soveraign?* and dost thou love the peace and glory of his Kingdom, as becomes an obedient subject of so great a Lord? why this is *intensively to will Christum Regem*, or to love him as King. And this is the third Office, and the fourth Character. If you would make sure work, this is a Rule which will not deceive you.

5. *Character.*

If we have a fellowship with Christ in his *honours and dishonours*, or in his *joys and sorrows*, then is our love not feigned unto Christ, but in *sincerity*. True-love (if I may be allowed so to speak) *mixeth concernments*; my meaning is, that it makes anothers joys and sorrows to be mine, as well as his: they may write *hatred upon themselves*, who are regardless whither it go well or ill with Christs interests in the world. *No communion with Christ, no love.* Even the personal reproaches and abuses which Christ indured here below, though so many hundred years since, do yet affect them; and they that love him, have a sympathy with him in them. Neither is it his joy alone that he was personally advanced by being raised again from the dead, and taken up to glory, to sit thereon at the right hand of God, but theirs also: Tell a loyal wife, that her husband is honoured, and her heart will leap at the tydings that are brought to her. 'Tis good news to love-sick souls to hear that Christ is now in Glory, they savour the advancements of their Lord, according to those words of Christ himself to his Apostles; *If ye loved me, ye would rejoyce, because I go to the Father, for my Father is greater than I*, Joh. 14. 28. They are glad by faith to see *the Son of Righteousness* after a dark and cloudy morning in his *Meridian Altitude*. They die, and are crucified with Christ in his death, *Rom.* 6. 3. *Gal.* 2. 19. And they feel a reviving of themselves in the Resurrection of their Lord; and hence it is said of them, that they are quickened together with him, *Ephes.* 2. 5. and that they sit together in heavenly places with him, *Ephes.* 1. 20. We read of *Mary*, that she *went weeping* to the grave of her Lord; but hearing that he was arose, she *came away rejoycing*: And no otherwise was it with his Disciples. Christ doth not triumph alone in his Ascension, but all such as love him, share therein together with him. And as they share with Christ in his personal joys and troubles; so do they no less, when any of his concernments in the world do either prosper, or else are trampled upon and clouded. 'Tis as the arrows of death to see either his Laws, Ordinances, Officers or Subjects trampled upon. The reproaches of the rebellious world reproaching their Lord, fall upon them, and are as so many darts struck into their own souls. This is that which successively feeds their joys and sorrows, that it goes well with the Militant Church here below, or that a cloud of displeasure and persecution is spread over it.

Luk. 24. 52. Act. 2. 26.

Joh. 20. 20.

Joh. 20. 11. compared with Mat. 28. 8.

Psal. 42. 10. & 69. 9.

6. *Character.*

Where love to Christ is sincere, there Christ is accounted by the soul to be its *Treasure*: and there is a *longing desire* in every such soul of the *nearest Communion* with him: I put both these together, though there be a very clear distinction between them, for brevity; it is a truly *conjugal* love, which

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can neither bear with distance, nor brook any Rival. And this is the meaning of the Spouse in that double expression, calling him *the chiefest of ten thousands*, and professing him to *be altogether lovely*. The soul that loves Christ, may love other things, and esteem them lovely; but she will say of none, that they are *altogether lovely*, but only of her Lord. When one asked *Alexander* to shew him his Treasure, the report is, that he pointed to his friend *Ephestion*; the *Treasure* of a soul that sincerely loves Christ, is *Christ himself* [*Deus meus est omnia*, or] *my God is my all, saith the soul*, that loves God as his *ultimate end*. Hence is that of *David*, Psal. 73. 25, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and who is there on Earth that I desire besides thee?* [*Christus meus est omnia*, or] *my Christ is my all*, saith the soul, that is upon inquiry how to find acceptation with God. Whence is that of *Paul*, *Doubtless I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledg of Christ*, Phil. 3. 1. 'Tis the proper Motto of a love-sick soul, *None but Christ:* The sincerity of a Christians love lies in giving a preheminency to the Redeemer, whom it loves above every thing else. The soul that loves Christ, values nothing in comparison of him, no not his own benefits. [*Mertricius amor est, plus annullum, quam sponsum amare*, or] It is a note of a Harlot, to prefer the *portion* before the *person*. And that is a no less true than noble speech of the devout *A. Kempis* [*Nobilis amator non quiescit in dono, sed in Christo super omne donum*; or] The *Worthy and Noble Lover values* not Christ so much by what he brings, as by what he is himself. The soul that loves Christ, loves Ordinances, because they are the *banquetting house of her Lord*, wherein she is often refreshed by him; she loves the *Priviledges* of the Gospel, because they are the *Purchase* of her Lords blood; She loves her own *Graces*, because they are the rare Ornaments which Christ hath put upon her to render her beautiful, and fit her for his own imbraces; and yet after all, her language to Christ is, *Not thine, but thee:* She will not so value them, as to forget him that gives them; Christ is her Center, and therefore she rests not, but will lay by, and *through* all to come to him; she can scarce forbear a fit of Impatience sometimes to think of that distance that is still between them. See *Cant.* 8. 14, *Make haste my beloved* (saith the Spouse to Christ there) *and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young Hart upon the Mountains of Spices:* And such another Ejaculation is that, *Revel.* 22. 17, 20. where the whole Church is brought in crying to Christ, *Come Lord Jesus, come quickly:* While our hearts dwell below upon the thick Clay, and have no daily desires to send forth (*as Doves from the Ark*) for communion with Christ; There is little sign of sincere love to him.

Cant. 5. 10. 16.

Cant. 2. 4.

Cant. 4. 1, &c.

7. *Character.*

We may know our sincerity in love, by *the value we put upon our selves*, as well as upon Christ; if our interest in Christ *be the Rule by which we* value our selves, that will argue true love; when this makes it day in our souls, that Christ smiles upon us, and on the other side, when this spreads the *darkness of the* night over us, that he hides his face from us; then we love him. *David* loved God heartily, and therefore when God smiled, he rejoyced, *Psal.* 4. 6. and when *God hid his face, he was* as much *troubled* then, as before delighted; 'Tis thus in every relation, where there is sincerity of affection, as

Psal. 30. 7.

the bond thereof, and a dependance between them, of the one upon the other; 'Tis thus between a Prince, and a loyal Favourite; between a Husband, and a loving Wife; 'tis thus between the love-ſick ſoul and Chriſt; when ſhe injoys him, then none ſo *lightſome* in Countenance as ſhe: According to the nature of love, her affections are hardly concealed; they are even too big for her heart to cover, and therefore ſhe can ſcarce withhold her ſelf from a Holy exultation before every one that meets her. Whereas on the other ſide, if Chriſt but withdraws, if ſhe *calls*, and he *gives no anſwer*; if he ſeems to avoid her Company, and to deſpiſe her familiarity; what then? Oh then her Joy is turned into Gall, and her Pleaſantneſs into Wormwood; then her Countenance grows *dark and ſable*, and her thoughts within her are full of horror, dejection, and confuſion: ſhe goes up and down like a perſon almoſt diſtracted, and every place is made to *Eccho* to her griefs and mournings; ſhe goes from Ordinance to Ordinance, and from one Watchman to another, and proclaims to them all the ſickneſs of her ſoul, if peradventure ſhe may recover again the ſight of her Beloved. All this and much more with incomparable elegance you may read deſcribed in the *Song of Solomon*. Thus as the Marigold opens to the Sun in the firmament, ſo doth the heart of a ſincere Chriſtian to the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, Chriſt in Glory.

8. *Character.*

Where Love is ſincere, the ſoul will *be often on the Wing of Meditation, and buſied in the contemplation* of Chriſt. It's an old Rule, and a true one, [*Anima eſt ubi amat, non ubi animat*, or] The ſoul dwells as much where it hath fixed its love, nay, more there, than where it hath its moſt natural operation: Chriſt and the Believer that loves him, live as if they had but one ſoul betwixt them. 'Tis not the diſtance between Earth and Heaven that can ſeparate them; True love will find out Chriſt wherever he is; when he was upon the Earth, they *that loved him*, kept his Company; and now that he is gone to Heaven, and out of ſight, thoſe that love him, are frequently *ſending* up their *hearts* unto him. And indeed they never think themſelves Intelligent in any thing that is worth the knowing, until they have made their ſouls much acquainted, and familiar with their *Crucified* Saviour, 1 *Cor.* 2. 2.

9. *Character.*

2 Sam. 13. 2. 1 King. 21. 4. Heſt. 5. 13.

There will be *a Willingneſs to part with all for him:* How many goodly things do perſons of all ſorts contemn for ſome *one* thing which they love? *Amon*, *Ahab*, and *Haman*, are three great examples of this: Take but one inſtance, and it ſhall be of a Covetous man; Why he diſregards all the learned accompliſhments in the World, for a little gain; He thinks himſelf better, when he hath got that which comes out of the *Bowels* of the Earth he treads on, than that which comes from the Manſion-houſe of God, in *the Heaven* above him: and therefore, how familiarly, and eaſily will he part with the one to chuſe the other? no bonds of nature or religion are enough to reſtrain him; 'Tis the reſolution of a ſoul that loves Chriſt, that nothing ſhall part them; they are habitually Martyrs already, and if he put them to it, 'tis not *life it ſelf* that they will account too precious to lay down for the

Act. 20. 24.

ſake

ſake of him. All the *waters and floods* of perſecution, temptation, and affliction, ſhall not quench their flames of love, *Cant.* 8. 7. Witneſs thoſe words of *Ignatius* [πῦρ καὶ σάυρος, &c. or] let fire, croſs, *&c.* and all the torments, which by men or beaſts can be inflicted on my body, yea, and add to them, what all the Devils in hell can do upon it, if it were by *ſolemn ſentence of Excommunication* delivered to them; yet would I go through them all, to come to the boſome of my Lord. Mat. 10. 37. Rev. 12. 11. Joh. 13. 5, 6, 14.

10. *Character.*

There will be a willingneſs *to ſtoop to the meaneſt offices*, for the ſervice of Chriſt; *love* (we uſe to ſay) *ſtands not with Majeſty*; it did not do ſo in the perſon of our Saviour, when he waſhed and wiped his Diſciples feet; and thoſe that love him will not think it much to conform to his example; they will not think they can ever ſtoop too low for the ſake of him, *Joh.* 21. 15.

11. *Character.*

If it ſticks not *barely in the perſon of Chriſt*, but *reacheth to all* that have an union with him; if it be to Chriſt *myſtical*, as well as *perſonal*; if you love their perſons, their graces, their fellowſhip, *&c. Tell me* (ſaith the Spouſe) *where thou cauſeſt thy flock to reſt at Noon?* She delights to be led forth with them into the *green Paſtures* of his ordinances, and to feed together with them; If ſhe hath any thing, it's all theirs, who have an equal intereſt in Chriſt with her ſelf: ſhe will make uſe of her graces, ſubſtance, and all, that fellow-members may be refreſhed: It makes them of Catholick ſpirits. The Apoſtle is peremptory, and brandeth them all as lyars, that pretend to the one of theſe without the other. See 1 *John* 4. 19. & 5. 1. & *John* 13. 34, 35. Cant. 1, 7. Act. 2. 44, 45.

12. *Character.*

We may know it by its *Concomitants*. Sincere love goes not but in the company of every other grace; It either preſuppoſeth, or ſtrongly implieth and inferreth the *whole duty* of a Chriſtian. [*Diligere Chriſtum* (ſaith *Aquinas*) *eſt Chriſto in omnibus ſe ſubjicere, & regulam Præceptorum ejus in omnibus ſequi:* or] to love Chriſt, is to fulfil the whole Law of Chriſt; 'tis a moſt comprehenſive grace; 'tis the abſtract of the New Creature, the *whole* Image of God: in *one word*; 'tis the ſubſtance of the Divine Workmanſhip upon the ſoul. They are but *Ciphers*, and ſignifie nothing in Chriſtiunity, who are without it. Briefly, to love Chriſt, it is in ſome meaſure to partake of every grace, and to be a *Chriſtian altogether*. Joh. 14. 15.

Theſe are the Characters, ſome I have omitted, and in others I have been brief, becauſe I would reſerve a little room for the ſecond Caſe: Give me leave but briefly to ſuggeſt a few things for ſatisfaction of one doubt, and I ſhall preſently come to that. Will ſome ſay, If this be love in ſincerity, *who then loves him aright?* It is no leſs dangerous to draw out the deſcription of a grace, ſo as none can find it, than to leave it ſo, as *none may ſuſpect* the want or abſceen thereof in themſelves; and upon that *Rock*, they will tell me I have *ſplitted* in the deciſion of this Caſe, there being hardly any one that can

go

go from Character to Character, and ſay after a thorough ſearch, *Now I know that I am a lover of Chriſt in ſincerity:* For anſwer to which ſcruple, I ſhall barely ſuggeſt a few Conſiderations.

1. It is moſt certain and notorious, that there is much *counterfeit love* abroad; and it was not the leaſt part of my deſign to unmask it. Characters ſerve as well to *convince* the preſumptuous, as to *eſtabliſh* the ſincere and upright. There is much in the world that looks like love, that is not; ſuch are thoſe *Vagous* affections, that are to a *Chriſt in general*, and not to him as King, Prieſt, and Prophet; And thoſe counterfeit affections, which are to Chriſt upon the *ſole* Arguments of Education, Cuſtom, which are as truly in a *Turk* to his *Mahomet*, and ſerve as well to *juſtifie the Jew in his blaſphemy* againſt Chriſt, as the Chriſtian in his pretended love of him; for love to Chriſt, *ſay Divines*, is not ſo much to be meaſured by the degree, and fervour, as by the grounds and motives; And alſo that barren love which works up the ſoul to no meaſure of obedience unto him; And laſtly, that which allows Chriſt but the worlds *leavings* in our hearts, every thing being conſtantly preferred before him: And what a vaſt number of perſons go no further than theſe?

2. Many perſons are truly gracious, who yet know not whether they have any grace or not: It requires more *skill* to *ſearch* out the nature of a grace, and to find it in our ſelves, than barely to exerciſe it; The former are works of more judgment, and require a *deep acquaintance* with our own hearts; whereas to the latter, it is enough if a perſon be but of an *ordinary* underſtanding, and an *honeſt* heart. Beſides, Graces have their degrees, like the waters of the Sanctuary; and where *grace* is very *ſhallow* and *little*, it is *exceeding difficult* to know that there is any at all: And ſuch perſons ſhould do well, who are ſo weak, rather *to ſpend time in the exerciſe of grace*, than in trying whether they have grace or no; for commonly *it is but labour in vain*.

Ezek. 47. 3, 4, 5.

3. There are no ſouls in whom this grace is really planted, but they have all theſe Characters drawn upon their hearts to know it by, more or leſs; I do not ſay, they can find them in themſelves, and know they have them, but only that they have them. And of this I need give no further evidence, than what you will eaſily find your ſelves, if you will but ſtudy the nature of love to Chriſt, by the Rule of it laid down in the fifth Propoſition premiſed, and by the third and fourth Characters: for I am well aſſured that Chriſt cannot be loved, as therein deſcribed, unleſs all theſe particulars mentioned, be either antecedent thereto, or connexed with it.

2. *Caſe.*

And ſo I come to the ſecond Caſe, *viz. How we may get our love to him kindled and inflamed?* And I ſhall proceed in the Reſolution of this, by theſe four ſteps.

1. I will diſcover the danger of being without this grace.

2. I will add ſome moving Conſiderations to provoke all that love their ſouls, to look after it.

3. I will give directions to them that have it not, how to get it.

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4. I will add a few more Directions for them that have it, how it may be increased and inflamed?

I begin with the first, which I will dispatch by these two steps. 1. By discovering the Hainousnes of sin. 2. The Terror of the Punishment due thereto.

Now that you may understand the first, besides what hath been said *in the fore-mentioned Tract*, proving it to be a sin *against the Fathers love and wisdom*; *the whole work of the Son, and the special Oeconomy of the Holy-Ghost*; I add first, it's a sin utterly *subverting the whole* design of the Gospel, casting a scorn upon the grace of all the three persons, and not so much as acknowledging what was done by them, as worthy the least acceptance; it writes *vanity* upon all the promises, and is a *frustration* to the design of Christ in that *Noble dispensation*, there being nothing that he did more aim at, than to testifie his own, and his Fathers love to us, and to recover from us our love to them again. Joh. 3. 17. 1 Joh. 1. 3.

2. It is *interpretatively a confederacy with Satan against God and Christ*; The proper and grand wickedness of the Devil, being his opposition to the design of God in glorifying himself by the salvation of mankind through Christ; which yet so far as we are haters of Christ, we are in our measure guilty of, as well as he. Mat. 6. 24. Act. 13. 10. Heb. 10. 28.

3. It is *a complicated sin*; *many sins in one.* Such as are *foul ingratitude, Rebellion*, it being the casting off the Soveraignty of a Rightful Lord: Cruelty to Christ, and as it were, a kicking him upon the bowels, *a Christicidium*; and to our selves, *Prov.* 8. 36. the tearing out our own bowels, with our own hands; *spiritual uncleanness and adultery*, it being a treacherous revolting from Christ after profession of Marriage to him. Jam. 4. 4.

4. It is *a sin which opens the door to all wickedness*, Resistance of the Spirit, contempt of the Gospel, and them that bring it, sleighting of Ordinances, Treason against Christ as King, and implacable bitterness and enmity against his subjects and children. Joh. 15. 18, 19.

5. It is *an irrational sin*, or such for which there cannot be the *least Apology*; because Christ was lovely in himself, did much to ingage our hearts to him, earnestly intreated us to place our affection upon him, sending his messengers to woo us, bestowing gifts upon us, *like a King*, to oblige us, and making almost incredible offers of much more that he would do for us; yea, finally, threatning us even with *Anathema Maranatha*, 1 Cor. 16. 22. if we withhold our hearts from him; and can such a sin after all this be extenuated? Cant. 1. 13, 14. 5. 9. *ad.* 16. 1 Pet. 1. 4.

6. It is *a sin brought forth, and nursed by the foulest abominations*, such as *spiritual darkness*, and ignorance, Notorious infidelity, as to the doctrine of the Gospel, Horrible Pride, Self-righteousnes, Idolatrous and carnal Self-love. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Joh. 5. 43, 44. 47.

7. It is a sin *against all our Covenants and Ingagements*, especially our *Baptismal-bond*, wherein we did solemnly promise Christ our hearts, and that in opposition to all others; the bond of Christian *Ingenuity*, *Self-love*, and *proper Interest*, *Profession and Relation*, as we bear his Name in the world. 2 Cor. 11. 2.

8. And

8. And lastly, It is a sin utterly inconsistent with the presence of *any one grace* in the soul; it being impossible that any thing should prosper, where this *weed* hath once setled and rooted it self; you may as well expect to find *branches without a Root*, as the *graces of the Spirit* without *love*: Thus very briefly you have an account of the danger of being without love to Christ, from the nature of the sin.

2. I argue it from the *Terror of the Punishment*: And certainly the *Just God* hath proportioned the *evil of this*, to the *quality of that*. Study well these few places of Scripture, *Joh.* 3. 19. *Mat.* 21. 41. *Heb.* 2. 3. & 10. 28, 29. & 12. 25. *Rev.* 2. & 3. throughout. Oh the terrors of the Lord that will one day be *heaped upon* the haters of his Son! See *Rev.* 6. 16. But we need not look any further for this matter, than *into the awakened conscience* of a *Rebel* against Christ in a fit of desperation: what *Scorpion-lashes* doth such a mans conscience give him! Oh the heat of this burning Caldron! with what rage and fury doth it break forth on every side, until the Soul is even become *a Hell* it to self! And *wouldest thou not love Christ* (will inraged conscience then say), so lovely in himself, and so full of love to thee? Couldst thou see him *sighing*, *bleeding*, *sweating*, *dying* for thy sake, and yet not love him? Couldst thou spurn at such *bowels*, and contemn such *prodigious* mercy? and that when this love would have opened to thee the door of *glory*? how great, how infinite glory? and when the rejecting of it would infallibly plunge thy soul into misery? how dreadful, how intolerable? was ever madness like thine, *oh my soul*, will *conscience* say? certainly Hell is too easie a punishment for such a *Serpent*, such an *Incarnate Devil* as thou art; well may God rejoyce to be avenged on such a wretch as thee, and make thee to drink up the very dregs of his Indignation; while others that *dwell in God*, shall dwell in love, oh how will God be nothing else: but fury, and wrath, and vengeance to thee? Thou shalt *one day* (and *that day* such as *never* shall have an end) hear Justice call upon Omnipotency still to add more flame to thy torment? Thus conscience will look backward, and forward, and even wreak it self with the most dismal flaming language, that it can find out, upon the haters of Christ; And is not that a dreadful sin, which shall thus set *a man against himself?* and put a sword into the hand of *cruel conscience* to cleave the soul in pieces? And is not that a dreadful punishment, when a man shall become his own *Accuser*, *Judg*, and *Executioner?* When conscience shall burn so hot within a man, that he shall be a terror to himself, and an eternal amazement? And yet alas what is all this to the *immediate impressions of the wrath of God* upon the soul? when he that hath said *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay*, shall grasp the soul in his dreadful hand: which might be further improved, and be demonstrated to be incomparably the forest part of the punishment; but I come to the second particular, which was to lay down some moving Considerations, to provoke such as love themselves, to love Christ; and besides the particulars last mentioned,

Heb. 10. 30.

Consider, 1. Who it is that I plead for this day: Sirs, I do not call you to dote upon thick clay, filth, and vanity: I do not plead to gain your hearts to one that is not *worthy*, or hath not *deserved* that you should place your affections upon him; if you can make either of these manifest, hate him and

spare

ſpare no t; but I plead for one who is 1. glorious, and excellent; if you doubt it, read his Character, *Cant.* 5. 9, *What ſayeſt thou now*, is he not *altogether lovely?* is there any blemiſh to be found in him? and if thou miſtruſteſt the Judgment of the Church, ſure thou canſt not doubt of Gods; Hear this ſentence, *Matt.* 3. 17, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed*, He knew *of whom* he ſpake, for he *was his Son*; and he doth not ſay, he was pleaſed with him only, but well-pleaſed, *i. e.* delighted, (See *Prov.* 8. 30.) and ſatisfied. And was he *worthy of Gods love*, and doſt thou doubt, whether he hath deſerved thine? 2. Conſider, He is one that *died* for thee; firſt to purchaſe thy love, and ſince is gone to Heaven, where yet he doth not *ceaſe* to call upon thee, and invite thee to beſtow thy heart upon him; were he excellent, but proud, it would be little to thy advantage; But he ſtoops, and wooes, and intreats thee. 'Tis a day of the *Gladneſs of his heart* when he Iſa. 55. 1.
prevails but *with one ſoul* to cloſe with him: And all the rage of his perſecu- Luk. 15. 20.
tors did not grieve him more, than you will if you ſtand it out againſt him. Act. 9. 4.
3. Conſider, He is one that hath *the power of thy life and death* in his own Joh. 5. 21, 26.
hands; and this is one part of his Covenant, upon which thy life or death depends; as offered in the promiſe, ſo he waits: but as love is the Condition of it, ſo if thou hearkeneſt not, thou loſeſt thy ſhare therein; and what thou chuſeſt, be it life or death, thou ſhalt certainly have.

2. Conſider, What it is I plead for; why? all that I ask is love, and will you deny Chriſt that? I call thee to *think well of* Chriſt, to *deſire* him, to *take Complacency* in him; to breathe after union and eternal communion with him; And which of theſe doſt thou think *too much* for ſuch an object? or where canſt thou place them more fitly than upon him? what is he worthy of, if not of this? did ever *death* content it ſelf with ſuch a recompence? was ever any debt eaſier paid? any ſervice ſo eaſily performed as this, only to love? hath God made Chriſt a King, Prieſt, and Prophet, and is that all which thou muſt do, to partake of *his love* in him, to love him in thoſe relations, and wilt thou ſtick at this? Haſt thou any other way to the *boſom of God* but by him? and yet rather than thou wilt come thither *by love*, wilt thou *damn thy ſoul* by *hating Chriſt?* is not the injoyment of God worth the *labour of love?* ſhall all go, rather than be *ſaved by love to thy* 1 Theſ. 1. 3.
Redeemer?

3. Conſider, *What he will do for thee*, if thou art a ſincere lover of him; He comes not to *court* thee, and flatter thee to thy loſs; but his *reward* is Rev. 22. 12.
great, and he *brings it with him.* Give me leave to tell thee ſome particulars thereof; If thou wilt love him, he will *betroth thee to himſelf* in deareſt love; Hoſ. 2. 19, 20.
He will be thy *Bridegroom*, and thou ſhalt be his *Bride*; 'Tis not all thy *fil-* Epheſ. 5. 32.
thy garments, Rags, or Poverty that ſhall hinder, but he will be to thee the Zech. 3. 4.
covering of thine eyes: and a gladneſs of heart ſhalt thou be unto him, *Zeph.* Gen 20. 16.
3. 17. Thou ſhalt be *the Joy of* Chriſt himſelf; *for as the Bridegroom rejoy* Rv 21. 9.
ceth over the Bride; *ſo ſhall the Lord thy God rejoyce over thee.* 2. He will Iſa. 62. 5.
dwell with thee, Joh. 14. 23, 24. Husband and Wife dwell together, and ſo doth the betrothed ſoul and Chriſt. *I in them, and they in me*, ſaith Chriſt; Joh. 17. 23.
Now this is a privileg which carries *many in the womb* of it, ſuch as are Rev. 3. 23.
theſe: 1. *Intimacy and daily familiarity*; Chriſt and Chriſtians, *take their* Epheſ 5. 20.

meals together; there is no Communion so near, as that which is between them. *One spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. 2. *Maintenance, and provision. He is*
1 Tim. 5. 8. *worse than an infidel, that provides not for his own house.* All that live under the same roof with Christ, have their *daily bread* provided for them at his
Heb. 13. 5. charges; and he hath said, *that he will never leave them.* 3. *Protection*, every mans house is his Castle, they are under *safe Covert* that dwell with Christ. 4. Counsel, guidance, and direction: This great Husband *dwells*
1 Pet. 3. 7. *with all his family according to knowledg*, for he teacheth them *all his secrets*,
Psal. 25. 14. and *shews them his Covenant.* 3. He will *Interest thee* in all *his own Riches*,
Rom 8. 17. *Purchases, possessions*, and Dignities; together with his person, he offers Hea-
1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. ven and Earth for a *Dowry*. All things are his by Purchase, and thou shalt be a Co-partner or *Co-heir* with him, when thou art espoused to him. 4. He
Isa. 54. 7, 8. Psal. 89. 33. will manifest the *highest Indulgence and tenderness towards thee.* Not all thy cross-walkings (if through temptation it shall so fall out) shall put him upon any more than *momentany* departure from thee; for he hath resolved that
Cant. 6. 3. *his faithfulness towards thee shall never fail*; and therefore when thou seemest
Rom. 8. 28, 38. almost lost, and ready to despond, he will return to thee again, and the more time he hath lost by absence, the more full will his heart be of ravishing love and affection to thee.

5. He *will turn all to thy good*; neither thy *sins*, though many and great, nor thy *miseries*, though overwhelming and discouraging, no nor lastly shall
Phil. 1. 21. *death* it self, be ever able to make a divorce between thee and him; but serve *as a passage* to thee when thy work is done, into the Bride-chamber of thy Lord; and now tell me, hast not thou reason to love him?

4. Consider but thy case, while this Virgin-affection to thy Saviour is wanting.

1. Thou *multipliest thy whoredoms, and thy abominations* continually, for what are thy *Intensive willings* of other things, but so many acts of spiritual adultery, and base *prostitutions* of thy soul to thy dishonour and disadvantage, while other things *usurp* the room of Christ?

2. Thou art *a treacherous Hypocrite* and deceiver, forasmuch as thou pretendest to the eye of the world to be Christs, and yet art nothing less than his.

3. You lay *a bar in* against your selves, and the acceptance of all your du-
Gal. 5. 6. ties; when *faith works by love*, then is obedience illustrious, and meet for a gracious acceptation; that obedience which owes no part of it self to love, is worth little, and brings in no more than it is worth.

Job 27. 6. 4. You make *bonds* for your selves in death, *and lay up terrible reproaches in your Consciences* against the day of Judgment.

5. You make your *damnation* necessary; there being no Congruity to any of the Divine Attributes, much less to the Offices of Christ, that that man should ever be saved, who never had any sincere affection to him. These are some of the Considerations, which may be of use to them that have no spark of love yet kindled in their hearts: There are a few of the other kind, which may provoke to get this love *Inflamed* where it is, such as these:

Consider, 1. The love of Christ to thee was *a growing, increasing* love; I do not mean in respect of the *habit*, but in the outward demonstration there-

of.

of. The nearer he was to his death, the more exuberant in love; and when he roſe again, his heart did overflow with tender indulgence, as appears by the meltings of his bowels towards *Mary*, and over *Peter*; and much more may we believe him now to be full of them, now that he is at the right hand of God.

2. There is more *lovelineſs* in Chriſt, than ever thou canſt find out, or fathom; when we have let out our affections to the utmoſt, there will ſtill be more than we can find affection for; our love to eternity will have ſomething *of admiration* mixed with it.

3. It's all you can return to him; it's all he looks for at your hands; that which *lies in love*, and which *flows from it*; is the whole that is required to compleat Chriſtianity.

4. The more you love him, the more lovely you are unto him. Then hath Chriſt the higheſt complacency in us, when our hearts are under the *greateſt Raptures* of love to him.

5. It is the honour of a man to love Chriſt ſuperlatively. It is the ſweeteſt part of our lives, and that which Chriſt values us more by, than by any thing elſe: It's Heaven on Earth.

Beatus eſt, qui intelligit quid ſit amare Jeſum, & contemnere ſeipſum propter Jeſum. A Kempis. de imitatione Chriſti. l. 2. c. 7.

6. According to the meaſure of your love, ſo will all the reſt of your ſervices and graces be, *i. e.* either more or leſs, better or worſe. Love is like the Maſter-wheel in an Engine, making the whole ſoul to move faſter or ſlower. Theſe are the *conſiderations* of the laſt kind, will ſome ſay? oh, but *what ſhall we do to get this bleſſed affection into our ſouls*, which was the third thing propoſed: And in order thereto, I offer theſe Directions.

1. *Direction.*

Be *well acquainted with the nature* of this great duty. The great miſtake of the world lies in this; That is thought to be love, which is not; and thence men and women grow bold and confident, and value themſelves more than they ought. I have given in my beſt aſſiſtance, ſo far as the nature of the firſt Caſe would permit, to prevent miſtakes in this matter before; and therefore I will not do it over again. Only remember, if you would not miſcarry, that it is not a *Naked Chriſt*, but a *Chriſt advanced by incomparable Perſonal Excellencies*, and cloathed with his Offices of King, and Prieſt, and Prophet, that is the Chriſt to be beloved, and you cannot will miſcarry. This is that damning miſtake of the world, they love Chriſt, but not as dignified by God with any of his offices.

2. *Direction.*

Be much *in the ſtudy of your ſelves*, what you were originally, and what you are ſince become through your own miſcarriage, wilfulneſs and folly: Take your ſouls to the glaſs of the *Law*, and go from one precept to another, and when you have done there, go to the *Goſpel*; And be ſure you do not deal *ſleightly*, but underſtand throughly how *much* you have offended; And when you have well ſtudied the number and quality of your ſins, then conſider the juſtice and holineſs of the Eternal God, which you ſhall underſtand by the *ſame Law and Goſpel*, where they ſpeak the Divine Terror againſt offending-ſinners; but more eſpecially ſhall ye know it by going to the Croſs

of Christ, and wisely and seriously considering the horrour of that punishment which Christ there indured: for we *never know as we ought* the evil of sin, and our misery thereby, until we know what he indured to make an Expiation for it. Do this, and do it faithfully: They that *never knew themselves*, they are most *certainly without love to Christ*: And it is enough to prove it, because unless this foundation be first laid, they can see no sufficient reason for it.

3. *Direction.*

Mat. 16. 26. Get a true *Conviction* concerning *thy own ultimate end and happiness*, where it lies, *viz.* not in the *objects of sense*, but in the *Beatifical Vision of God*; possess thy soul by Scripture-light, of the grand importance of securing thy Interest therein; while you think your happiness lies any where else than in God, it will be irrational to love Christ, because his purpose and design is to take our hearts from the pursuit of all but God: and until you *know God to be your happiness*, you will never understand the *best reasons* (that I may not say, *the only*) that you have to love him. That *man loves Christ best, that most fully knows God to be his eternal rest and blessedness, and love him as such.*

4. *Direction.*

Get a *Gospel-knowledg of Christ*; both what he was originally, and what he hath stooped and humbled himself to be for thy sake; why, he came into the world, how he lived and died, and what was the Covenant between the Father and him? how he is exalted and honoured by God? and what great things are promised both by Father and Son to all that in *Christ sincerely draw nigh to God*. Oh the sweet gales of affection, which by spiritual Mediation upon Christ will begin to blow within us: We cannot *muse upon Christs dying, and rising again, and inviting us to love him*, but the fire will burn: *A considering Faith in Christ will naturally bud and blossome into love.*

5. *Direction.*

Believe *the reality of his love to thee*: I mean, that he did all that ever he did for thee, of a *hearty and real affection* to thee; and that he still desires to have the match made up betwixt thy soul and himself: The *fond prejudice* whereby souls put discouragements upon themselves, is that which spoils many a match: Do not *weaken thy soul by making difficulties* where there are none; if thou heares Christ inviting, stir up thy self (oh thou convinced soul) as if thou heardest him even *calling to thee by Name*; Believe it, that Christ is never better pleased, than *when he is loved*; and that he came no less to procure thy love, than to testifie his own. The way to *love Christ in good earnest, is to believe that he is so in his offers of grace to us.*

6. *Direction.*

Understand the world throughly, and be jealom of thy own heart therein: Remember that of the Apostle (who knew what it was to love Christ, as well as any man ever did), 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* We may well enough add, *Nor the love of the Son:* We may offer to our Lord [*cor fractum*, or] a broken-heart, but we must not

not preſume to deſire him to accept our [*cor diviſum*, or] divided heart: Remember that Chriſt and the World are two, contrary each to other, and the ſingle ſtream of love cannot run two contrary ways at once. *If our hearts be not crucified to the world, the love of Chriſt will never live within us.*

7. *Direction.*

Be much in attendance on thoſe means or Ordinances, wherein Chriſt is *evidently ſet forth*, and by his Spirit wooing ſouls to love him. If Faith comes by hearing, ſo no leſs certainly doth love. Chriſt moſt commonly honours his own Ordinances, and Officers, in making up the match between himſelf and ſouls; ſo he did *Paul*, 2 Cor. 11.2.

8. *Direction.*

Go to God and Chriſt for love: When you have gotten your hearts well warmed with the uſe of all the fore-mentioned means, then go to God and Chriſt, and turn thy *Meditations* into *Petitions*. Plead *hard*, and *heartily*, all thoſe moving Conſiderations which were ſet down to uſher in theſe Directions. God *delights to honour Prayer* in this great work of *his*, in drawing ſouls to Chriſt: No Prayer, no Faith: And it is as true, *No Prayer, no Love, no Marriage to Chriſt.*

I have done with the Directions of the firſt kind; and have therein almoſt prevented my ſelf from going any further; it being a Rule in the ſpiritual, as well as the natural growth, that *we are nouriſhed by the very ſame that gave us our firſt beings.* If we know by what means we came by our love at firſt, and have but appetites whetted on to a further growth, we need little more. And therefore having firſt perſwaded you carefully to continue to practiſe over the fore-mentioned Directions, I only add.

1. *Direction.*

Conſider much *your own Experiences*, and the *great advantages* you have made by this grace: I need not tell what they are, becauſe ye know them well enough already; and the ſenſe of paſt-advantage will beſt quicken to future diligence; which is the ſecond

2. *Direction.*

Be conſtant in the *exerciſe of that love ye have*: The beſt way to *ſtrengthen any* habit, is to be *often repeating its Acts*. We cannot do any thing better to increaſe love, than to be often *acting* love.

3. *Direction.*

Get *Faith more rooted*, and that will make your love to be more inflamed. If you would have *fruitful branches*, you muſt keep *the root* of the Tree *fat*; and if you would have *any Grace* to thrive, you muſt be *ſure to ſtrengthen* Faith.

4. *Direction.*

Take *heed you be not willingly guilty of any known wickedneſs againſt Chriſt*; for this will cauſe Chriſt to withdraw; it will occaſion in thy heart *a jealouſie*, and that will be an *abatement* of thy love: Be conſcientiouſly diligent in all known duties.

5. *Direction.*

5. *Direction.*

Get thy heart daily *more throughly crucified to the world*; and *better acquainted with Heaven*, and the *love of God*. The more *you love God*, the more you will, and muſt love Chriſt.

6. *Direction.*

Be much in the Communion of Saints, and then eſpecially when together with them thou mayeſt look on, and admire the love of thy crucified Saviour in the Lords Supper. They *that are moſt where Chriſt* is to be enjoyed, *love him beſt*; And theſe are briefly the heads of Directions in anſwer to each of theſe Inquiries; they might have been more largely inſiſted on, and preſſed, but this defect muſt be ſupplied by your ſelves.

Remember again, and with that I will conclude, That it is not the knowledg of theſe Directions, that will advantage you, but the ſerious and diligent practice of them; *And ſo Grace be with all them that in the diligent uſe of theſe means get and inflame their love to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity.*

VVherein

Wherein lies that exact Righteouſneſs, which is required between Man and Man.

Matt. VII. 12.

Therefore all things whatſoever you would that men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

THeſe Words being brought in by way of Inference from ſomething ſaid before, we muſt look back a little to find out the relation of them to the former Verſes. At the ſeventh verſe Chriſt commands to ask of God thoſe things which we want; to encourage us to ask, he promiſes we ſhould receive; to induce us to believe this promiſe, he puts a temporal caſe; Our earthly Fathers which are evil, give us good things when we ask them, how much more eaſily may we believe this of a good God, of infinite goodneſs? Now as we deſire God ſhould give us thoſe things we ask, ſo we ſhould do to others; and not only ſo, but *univerſally in all other things, what we would that men ſhould do to us, that we ſhould do to others. That men ſhould do unto you*; though the perſons be expreſt, yet we may take it impersonally, by an uſual *Hebraiſm*, as if it had been ſaid, *whatever* you would ſhould be done unto you, leaving the perſon to be ſupplied in the largeſt ſenſe; thus, whatever you would ſhould be done unto you by God or men. *This is the law and the Prophets*, i. e. This is the ſum of the Old Teſtament, ſo far as concerns our duty to our neighbour.

The *Obſervation* which ariſeth from the words is this:

The great rule of equity in all our dealings with men, is this, to do as we would be done unto; This Rule hath been otherwiſe expreſt, but not more emphatically in any other form of words than this here in the Text; *Mat.* 22. 39, *Love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*; this requires that we ſhould bear the ſame *affection* to our Neighbour which we would have him bear to us; but the *Rule* in the *Text* expreſly requires that we ſhould do the ſame *offices* to others, which we would have them do to us. *Severus* the Emperor (as the *Hiſtorian* tells us) did learn this rule of Chriſtians, and did much reverence Chriſt, *Lampridius.*

and

and Chriſtianity for it, but he expreſt it negatively, *Quod tibi non vis, alteri ne feceris*; Now this forbids us to do injuries to others, but doth not ſo expreſly command us to do kindneſſes and curteſies.

In ſpeaking to this Rule, I ſhall give you,

1. The *Explication* of it.
2. The *Grounds* of it.
3. The *Inſtances* wherein we ought principally to practice it.

1. For *Explication*, the meaning of it is this: Put thy ſelf into the Caſe and circumſtances of every man with whom thou haſt to do, that is, ſuppoſe thou wert he and as he is, and he were thy ſelf and as thou art; that then which thou wouldſt deſire he ſhould do to thee, that do thou to him; and that which thou wouldſt be unwilling he ſhould do to thee, do not thou to him. Now this is an *exact* rule, for we are very curious in determining our own priviledges, and what duty others owe to us; juſt ſo much as we take to our ſelves, we muſt allow to others; what we expect from others when we are in ſuch circumſtances, we muſt do the ſame to them in the like. And this is a *plain* and eaſie rule: many men cannot tell, what is Law or Juſtice, or right in ſuch a Caſe, many cannot deduce the Laws of Nature one from another; but there is no man but can tell what it is that he would have another man do to him; every man can take his own actions, and put them into the other ſcale, and ſuppoſe, if this that I do now to another, were to be done to me, ſhould I like it? ſhould I be pleaſed, and contented with it? And thus by changing the ſcale, his own ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions, will add nothing to the weight, for that ſelf-intereſt, which makes a man covetous, and inclines him to wrong another man for his own advantage, makes him likewiſe (when the ſcales are changed) unwilling that another man ſhould wrong him; that ſelf-conceit which makes a man proud, and apt to ſcorn, and deſpiſe others, makes him willing that another ſhould contemn him.

I queſtion not but by this time you underſtand the meaning of the rule; but we are not yet paſt all difficulties about it; Three things are to be done, before this rule will be of uſe to us.

1. We muſt make it appear, that it is *reaſonable*.
2. Make it *certain*, for till it be certain it cannot be a rule.
3. Make it *practicable*.

1. We muſt make it appear to be *reaſonable*; The difficuliy about the reaſonableneſs of it is this; According to this rule I ſhall be obliged to do that many times, which is ſinful, and to omit that which is a neceſſary duty; I will give two or three inſtances; *Saul* would have had his Armour-bearer to have kill'd him, might he therefore have kill'd his Armour-bearer if he had been willing, and had deſired it? I may not be an inſtrument, or furtherer of another mans ſin, though I were ſo wicked as to deſire that another would be ſo to me. If I were a Child, I would not have my Father correct me; or a malefactor, I would not have the Magiſtrate cut me off; muſt there therefore be no correction or puniſhment? Now becauſe of theſe, and the like inſtances which may be given, the rule is neceſſarily to be underſtood of things that may be done, or omitted, *i.e.* which are not unlawful or unreaſonable;

Saul

Saul might not kill his Armor-bearer; I may not further another mans ſin, in the caſes propounded, becauſe theſe things may not be done, they are morally impoſſible, that is, unlawful; A Parent or Magiſtrate may not wholly omit Correction or Puniſhment, becauſe ſuch omiſſion would tend to the ruin of good manners, and of humane Society.

2. We muſt make the rule *Certain*; The difficulty about the certainty of it, is this; everlaſting diſputes will ariſe about what is lawful and reaſonable, and unlawful and unreaſonable; Now we muſt reduce it to a certainty thus; Whatever I would that another ſhould do to me, that I ſhould do to him, unleſs the thing be *plainly* and *evidently* unlawful or unreaſonable: and this cuts off all diſputes: for though there may be perpetual diſputes about what is lawful and reaſonable, or the contray, yet there can be no diſpute about the unlawfulneſs and unreaſonableneſs of thoſe things which are plainly and evidently ſo, for that which is plain and evident, is out of all diſpute. To confirm this, let us conſider another Text, *Phil.* 4. 8, where the Apoſtle exhorts Chriſtians to follow whatever things are *true*, and *honeſt*, and *juſt*, and *pure*; and as a diſcovery of what things are ſuch, he adds, whatever things are *lovely*, of *good report*, and *praiſe-worthy*; that is, what-ever things are aimable, well ſpoken of, and praiſed by wiſe and good men (who are the only competent Judges of theſe things); if they be not plainly contrary to truth or honeſty, or juſtice, or purity, follow theſe things; and if this be not the meaning, thoſe words *lovely*, of *good report*, *praiſe-worthy*, are ſuperfluous, and do not at all direct our converſation, which certainly the Apoſtle intended to do by them.

3. We muſt make it *practicable*. There are two things which make the practiſe of it difficult.

1. A ſeeming *contradiction* in the rule.

2. *Partiality* in judging of the circumſtances of other mens conditions and our own.

1. A ſeeming *contradiction* in the rule; which you will ſee in theſe inſtances; if I deſire a thing, I would not have another ſtand in competition with me for it: if another deſire a thing, I would not have him think much, that I ſtand in competition with him. If I be indebted to another, I would not have him arreſt me; if another be indebted to me, I would not have him think much that I arreſt him. When we ſell, we care not how dear; when we buy, we care not how cheap. Now if this were a real contradiction in the rule, it were impoſſible it ſhould be put in practice; but it is only a contradiction in our *wills*, which muſt thus be reconciled to the *rule*.

1. We muſt conſider which of theſe wills is moſt reaſonable, and the greater reaſon and equity muſt carry it; and that which is plainly unreaſonable, in compariſon of the other, is not to be regarded. If we conſider the two firſt inſtances, this is moſt reaſonable, that where men have an equal right, they ſhould be allowed an equal liberty to uſe that right; another man hath as much right to ſtand in competition with me for any thing, as I to ſtand in competition with him, and

to arreſt me in caſe of debt, as I to arreſt him; and it is plainly unreaſonable that I ſhould uſe this right, and another be debarred from it.

2. If both theſe Contradictory wills be plainly unreaſonable, as in the third inſtance of buying and ſelling, they muſt be *accommodated* by finding out ſuch a *medium* as is *equally and mutually* good for all buyers and ſellers, that is, ſuch a proportion of gain may be taken, and muſt be allowed to be taken, as will be equally and mutually good for all buyers and ſellers.

2. Another difficulty in the practice of this rule, ariſeth from mens *partiality* in judging of the circumſtances of other mens conditions and their own; we are apt to leſſen the circumſtances of another mans condition, and to over-value our own; another mans concernments ſeem leſs to us than they are, and our own greater than they are. Now this difficulty will moſt eminently appear in *Caſes of paſſion* and *intereſt*, and thoſe *ſubordinate relations* which are at the greateſt diſtance; another man provokes me, I revenge my ſelf on him; one asks me, Would you be contented to be thus dealt withall; I am ready to anſwer, Yea, if I ſhould ſo provoke another; I aggravate the fault of his provocation, and leſſen that of my own revenge, here is *paſſion*. I deſire a curteſie of a man which he cannot conveniently do for me, he denies me, I think much at him, becauſe I judg the *curteſie leſs*, and *his obligation* to do it *greater* than indeed it is; here is *intereſt*. I think, if I were a Father, I ſhould not carry my ſelf ſo ſeverely towards my Children; if I were a Maſter, I ſhould give more liberty to ſervants, and uſe them with a greater familiarity; if I were a Miniſter, I ſhould not gall the conſciences of people by ſo free and open a reproof of ſin; if I were a Magiſtrate, I ſhould make other Laws, or puniſh ſome crimes more or leſs ſeverely: Now if men frequently thus miſ-judg, how ſhall this rule be put in practiſe?

To remove theſe difficulties, as much as may be, and to make the practiſe of this Rule more eaſie: obſerve theſe rules.

1. Labour to underſtand truly every mans condition, ſo far as you have opportunity; this is eaſily ſaid, but how ſhall we come to do it? Thus, when you are in any condition, obſerve diligently the motions of your own mind, and how your affections then work, and what apprehenſions you then have of things, and what it is that in ſuch a condition you deſire, and expect from others; and labour to remember this when you are out of that condition, and to retain the ſenſe which you then had of things.

2. In caſes wherein you are unexperienced, and which you cannot reaſonably be preſumed to underſtand, partly becauſe of your diſtance from that condition, partly becauſe of the oppoſition of your own intereſt; and partly becauſe of the miſts and clouds of your own paſſion; truſt the concurrent experience of others that are in that condition: and think that you ought not to do that to another, which the generality of mankind count grievous; and that fit to be done, which the moſt and wiſeſt

wiſeſt in ſuch a condition and relation, do uſually expect. If men when they are under, and lye at the mercy of others, generally deſire that clemency and moderation ſhould be uſed towards them, how juſt ſoever thou mayeſt think thy ſeverity is, and that thou wouldſt be contented that another ſhould deal ſo with thee, yet do not truſt thy preſent apprehenſions of things, but believe that thou wilt have the ſame ſenſe of things when they lie heavy upon thee, with the reſt of mankind; and when thou art in their circumſtances, thou wilt deſire quarter as they do. In like manner, that reſpect and obedience which Parents, and Maſters, and Magiſtrates do generally expect (even the beſt and wiſeſt of them) that do thou pay to them; and though it may have ſome appearance of rigour, and injuſtice, yet believe that when thou comeſt to be in the ſame relation, thou wilt expect the ſame things as they do; and that thou doſt now judg otherwiſe, proceeds from thy inexperience and diſtance from that condition, or from paſſion and oppoſition of intereſt.

3. Conclude, that in caſes betwixt Superiors and Inferiors, the partiality is uſually on the Inferiors ſide; and it is reaſonable thus to conclude, both becauſe Inferiors have ſeldom had experience of the other condition, as Superiours uſually have had; a child hath not been a Parent, or a ſervant ordinarily a Maſter, or a ſubject a Magiſtrate; but all Parents have been Children, and moſt Maſters have been Servants, and many Magiſtrates Subjects, and ſo they have had experience of both conditions; And likewiſe becauſe Inferiors cannot ſo well ſee the condition and circumſtances of thoſe that are above them, as thoſe that are above can of thoſe that are below them, they have the advantage of ground, and better opportunities of knowledg.

4. In judging of your preſent condition and circumſtances, always abate ſomething for the preſence of them, and for ſelf-love, and ſelf-intereſt, and other paſſions. He that doth not conſider how apt every man is unequally to favour himſelf, doth not know the littleneſs and narrowneſs of humane nature. We are near to our ſelves, and our own intereſt is near to us, and we ſee it in its full proportions, and with all poſſible advantages; other men and their intereſts are at a diſtance from us, and ſeem leſs to us then they are. Now we muſt make abatements for this, according to that experience which we have had of our own miſtakes, which, if we will obſerve, as we paſs from one condition into another, we may eaſily be convinced how great many times they are.

2. For the *grounds* of this. The equity of this Rule ſtands upon theſe foundations.

1. All men are equal in many things, and thoſe the greateſt things. Now I ſhould deal equally with him whom I acknowledg to be mine equal. *Have we not all one Father, hath not one God created us?* Are we not all made of the ſame materials? *Is it not appointed for all men once to die*, and after death to ſtand before the impartial judgment of God? We have all the ſame notions of right and wrong; we are all ob- Mal. 2. 10. Heb. 9. 27.

noxious to one another, and may be all beneficial one to another; we all love our ſelves, and ſtudy the advancement of our intereſt and happineſs. Thus far equal.

2. *In moſt of thoſe things wherein we are unequal, the inequality is not conſiderable*, ſo as to be a ground of any unequal dealing with one another. As to *ſtrength of body*, whatever the difference be, the inequality is not conſiderable, becauſe as to the greateſt effects of ſtrength there is an equality; every man that will venture his own life, may take away another mans, either by open force, or by ſurprize. *As to abilities of mind* (which we uſually call *parts*) there is *originally* a great equality, eſpecially if that received *Opinion* be true, that *ſouls are equal*: And as the *French* Philoſopher *Des Cartes* hath ingeniouſly obſerved, there is this notable ſign of the equality of mens underſtandings; *Nulla res* (ſaith he) *æquabilius inter homines diſtributa eſt quam bona mens*, &c. *Nothing is more equally divided among men, than a good underſtanding; Men will acknowledg others to be richer and ſtronger than themſelves; few will acknowledg others to be wiſer, or to have better parts than themſelves; every man thinks himſelf to have ſo good a proportion of parts and wiſdom, that even thoſe who are moſt covetous, and have the moſt inſatiable deſires as to other things, and whom nature could never ſatisfie in any thing elſe, yet would not deſire to have more wit than they have, or exchange their parts with any man.* Now there is no better ſign of an equal diſtribution of things, than that every man is contented with his ſhare. *Now becauſe all men generally think thus, it is to be preſumed that all are not deceived, but that there is ſome real equality, which is the ground of this conceit.* A difference indeed muſt be granted, but which ariſeth uſually from one of theſe two caſes, either an *unequal exerciſe of our parts*, or *an unequal temper of body*. Now thoſe who are ſo happy, as to exerciſe their underſtandings more than others, are very often rather conceited that they are wiſer than others, than really ſo; *for the greateſt Clerks are not always the wiſeſt men*; thoſe who are unhappy in the temper of their bodies, are thereby inclined, how weak ſoever they be, to conceit themſelves as wiſe as others. So that whatever real inequality there be, conceit levels all again. So that whether men be really wiſe, or only think themſelves ſo, it makes no difference as to mens dealing with one another; for they that think themſelves equal, will not deal but upon equal terms. So that *Ariſtotles* pretty notion, that *wiſe men are born to govern, and fools to obey*; ſignifies very little in this caſe; for there are but few ſuch fools in the world, but would govern if they can: So that by vertue of wiſdom or parts, no man can challenge a priviledg, or prerogative to himſelf above others, which another will no pretend to as well as he.

Dominus eſt alterius vitæ quicunque contemnit ſuam.

Diſſertat. de Methodo.

Qui velit ingenio cedere rarus erit.

Politic. c. 3.

3. *In all thoſe things wherein men are unequal, the inequality is not fixt and conſtant, but mutable and by turns.* All things that belong to us, are either the *endowments* of the *mind*, the *accidents* of the *body*, or the *circumſtances* of our *outward eſtate*; Now thoſe that are moſt unequal in any of theſe, may be equal; for the inequality may turn and be as much on the other ſide. A diſeaſe may ruin the moſt happy and excellent

memory,

memory, and make a man forget his own name; a little knock on any ſide of the head, may level the higheſt *underſtanding* with the meaneſt; *beauty*, *health* and *ſtrength* may be blaſted by a diſeaſe, or a thouſand other accidents; *Riches*, and *Honour*, and *Reputation*, are the moſt ſlippery and brittle things that belong to us; and when theſe are gone, *friends* will fall off, like leaves in *Autumn*. Now why ſhould I deſpiſe another man, when I may be as ſilly as he; or bear down another by my ſtrength, when I may be as weak as he; or inſult over anothers poor and low condition, when a day may level me with his meanneſs, and raiſe him to be as great and rich as I am?

4. Another ground is, *the mutual and univerſal equity and advantage of this Rule.* Upon thoſe terms I and all men ſhall be equally dealt with, it will be well with me, and well with all men. The obſervation of this Rule would ſecure peace to the world: and if it were generally practiſed, thoſe few that ſhould offend againſt it, would be looked upon as the peſts and troublers of humane ſociety. As by the violation of this Rule, every man becomes a *Wolf* and *Beaſt of prey* to another; ſo by the mutual obſervation of it, every man would be *a God* to another; men would be full of mutual goodneſs, and pity, and compaſſion; they would be mutual benefactors one to another. All men would be as happy as it is poſſible for them to be in this world, and no man could be miſerable if it were in the power of his neighbour to help him.

5. The laſt ground I ſhall mention is, *the abſurdity and inconvenience of the contrary.*

And this is the moſt proper way of proving this; for as *Ariſtotle* tells us, *Firſt Principles which are evident by their own light, cannot be proved by way of demonſtration*, but of *conviction*; As thus, *contradictions cannot be true at once*; This cannot be demonſtrated *a priori*, becauſe there is nothing true before it, to prove it by; therefore whoever ſhall deny it, muſt be convinced of the truth of it, by ſhewing the abſurdities of the contrary. In like manner this being one of the firſt Principles of humane ſociety, that we ſhould uſe no more liberty towards other men, than we would allow them to uſe towards us; the beſt way to convince any man of the reaſonableneſs and equity of it, will be to ſhew him the inconveniences of the contrary. Whereever this Principle is violated, men will think themſelves injured, where men are injured, they will be apt to vindicate themſelves; hence comes contention and wars, which looſe the bands of humane ſociety; or if a man can pardon an injury that hath received one, yet he that hath done it, cannot believe ſo, but he will fear revenge; and fear of being oppreſt, makes a man ſeek to anticipate and prevent another; ſo that every injury endangers the peace and ſecurity of mankind, and lays the foundation of perpetual miſchief; for by the ſame reaſon that I injure any man, I am obliged to ruin him.

He that breaks this Rule, doth what he can to break humane ſociety; that is, to ſpoil himſelf of all common protection, and to leave himſelf to ſtand upon his guard againſt all the world; in which ſtate no man can hope to continue, that is not wiſer and ſtronger than all the world.

Ariſtotle

ἢ θηρίον ἢ θεός. *Pol. c. 2.*

Ariſtotle tells us, *He that deſires to be alone, muſt either be a God or a wild beaſt*; that is, He muſt either be ſelf-ſufficient, and ſtand in need of nothing; or elſe be wild and ſavage, and delight in cruelty and miſchief.

3. The *Inſtances* wherein we ought chiefly to practiſe this Rule, are theſe:

1. In matters of *civil reſpect and converſation*, I muſt treat every man with that fair reſpect which I would have another to ſhew to me. We muſt accommodate our ſelves to mens particular tempers, and not be froward or intractable, or tenacious of our own humour, eſpecially when it lies in another mans way; but we muſt be apt to recede and give way, that there may be room for other mens tempers and humours, as well as ours; our humour muſt not take up all the world. Thoſe who want this *compleaſance*, are in ſociety (as one ingeniouſly compares them) like irregular ſtones in a building, which are full of roughneſs and corners; they *take* up more room than they *fill*; till they be poliſht and made even, others cannot lye near them: ſo men of ſharp and perverſe humours are unſociable, till the ruggedneſs and aſperities of their nature be taken off. We muſt not carry our ſelves inſolently, or ſuperciliouſly, or contemptuouſly towards others; we muſt not be contumelious, nor by deed or word, countenance or geſture, declare hatred or contempt of others. We muſt not upbraid one another with any imperfection, or weakneſs, or deformity; we muſt not peremptorily contradict others, we muſt not uſe to talk things diſpleaſing to others, wherein their credit, or relations, or (eſpecially their Religion) is concerned; *Joſephus* ſaith, this was one of *Moſes* his Laws (it was a good one whoſe ever it was) ὡς ἄλλαι πόλεις νομίζουσι θεὸς μηδεὶς βλασφημείτω, *Let no man blaſpheme that which other Nations count a God*, or make their Religion. Not but that every man may confute a falſe Religion, and indeavour by all fair ways to convince a Jew, or Turk, or Heathen; but we may not reproach another mans Religion, or provoke any man in ordinary converſation, by unſeaſonable and uncivil reflections upon it; for we are with meekneſs to convince gain-ſayers, to reprove men for their ſins, but not to upbraid them with them: We muſt give no offence to the Jew, or to the Gentile, remembring always that the wrath of man doth not work the righteouſneſs of God; and that *Michael* the Arch Angel, when he contended with the Devil, did not bring a railing accuſation againſt him, he did not revile him; no, not in heat of diſpute. And there is great reaſon why we ſhould thus carry our ſelves towards others, becauſe we our ſelves would not be contemned or deſpiſed, we would not have any man jeer us, or inſult over us, or upbraid us, or peeviſhly contradict us, or affront us by ſpeaking unhandſomly of us, or of our Relations, or of our Religion. Now if we would have others to conſider us, we muſt not neglect them; if we would be taken notice of for ſome body, we muſt not overlook others with contempt; every thing thinks it ſelf conſiderable; and there is nothing comes ſooner to us, or continues longer with us, than a ſenſe of our own worth; and we judg ill of humane nature, if we think another man is not as impatient of rude and uncivil

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amiſs,

amiſs, upon acknowledgment of my fault, I would be forgiven and received to favour. Now if we would be thus dealt with, we muſt bear with others; the beſt men need ſome grains of allowance; *Nullam unquam ingenium placuit ſine venia*; no man was ever ſo perfect, ſo accompliſht, ſo unexceptionable, but there was ſomething or other in his carriage that needed pardon; every man hath a particular humour; we muſt give ſome allowance for that; every man is ſubject to miſtake, we muſt allow for that too; and if a man have committed a fault, we muſt accept of an ingenuous acknowledgment, and be ready to grant him peace: There is a ſhame and diſdain in humane nature of too vile a ſubmiſſion; therefore we muſt not bring a man too low when we have him at advantage.

5. In matter of *report* and *repreſentation* of other *men*, and their *actions*. We muſt not take up a raſh prejudice, or entertain a ſiniſter apprehenſion of any upon ſleight grounds; do not repreſent any man, his words or actions at a diſadvantage; make the beſt of every thing; A mans good Name is like a Looking-glaſs, nothing is ſooner crackt, and every breath can ſully it. Handle every mans reputation with the ſame tenderneſs thou wouldſt have every man uſe towards thine. Do not ſlander or defame any man, or rejoyce to hear other mens miſcarriages ript open; do not account it an entertainment to cenſure and backbite all the World.

6. In matters of *truſt* and *fidelity*. Where I place a confidence, and repoſe a truſt, I would not be deceived, I muſt not deceive another, nor let any man fall that leans upon me. If a man truſt me with the management of his buſineſs, or lodg a ſecret with me, or put his life into my power, or commit the care of his eſtate or children to me after his death; Theſe are ingenuous truſts, and muſt be diſcharged with the ſame faithfulneſs we expect from others.

7. In matter of *duty* and *obedience*. We muſt give that honour to our Parents, which we would expect from our Children; and pay that reverence to Maſters, which we would exact from our Servants; We muſt riſe up before the gray head, and give reſpect to old Age: For let not us think, but that the change of *Relation*, and of *Age*, will have the ſame effect upon us which it hath upon the reſt of the World: It is a folly to talk, that when we are *Old*, we ſhall be pleaſed with the inſolencies of *Youth*; when we are Maſters, we ſhall not be at all offended with the contemptuous carriage of our Servants; that it will not touch our hearts, to have our Children undutiful and void of reſpect, to ſee the fruit of our body unnatural and unkind to us.

8. In matters of *freedom* and *liberty*, which are not determined by any natural or poſitive Law, we muſt permit as much to others, as we aſſume to our ſelves; and this is a ſign of an equal and temperate perſon, and one that juſtly values his own underſtanding and power. But there is nothing wherein men uſually deal more unequally with one another, than in indifferent opinions and practices of Religion: I account that an indifferent opinion which good men differ about, not that ſuch an opinion is in-

different

different as to truth or error, but as to ſalvation or damnation, it is not of neceſſary belief; By an indifferent practiſe in Religion, I mean, that which is in its own nature neither a duty, nor a ſin to do or omit. Where I am left free, I would not have any man to rob me of my liberty, or intrench upon my freedom; and becauſe he is ſatisfied ſuch a thing is lawful and fit to be done, expect I ſhould do it who think it otherwiſe; or becauſe he is confident ſuch an opinion is true, be angry with me becauſe I cannot believe as faſt as he. Now if another do ill in doing thus to me, I cannot do well in doing ſo to another. And do not ſay that thou art ſure thou art in the right, and he that differs from thee, in the wrong, and therefore thou mayeſt impoſe upon him, though he may not upon thee; hath not every man this confidence of his own opinion and practiſe, and uſually the weakeſt cauſe bears up with the greateſt confidence; now if thou wouldeſt not have another that is confident he is in the right, to impoſe upon thee, do not thou impoſe upon another for all thy confidence. We ſhould rather be modeſt, and ſay every one to our ſelves; *How came I to be ſo much wiſer than other men? which way came the Spirit of the Lord from ſo many wiſe and pious men, to ſpeak unto me? Is it a peculiar priviledg granted to me, that I cannot be miſtaken? or are not they moſt of all miſtaken, who think they cannot miſtake? If then I be but like other men, why ſhould I take ſo much upon me, as if my underſtanding were to be a rule, and my apprehenſions a ſtandand to the whole world? As if when another man differs from me, I did not differ as much from him: why may not another man underſtand the thing better than I do? or what crime is it if he underſtand them not ſo well? Were all mens underſtandings caſt in the ſame Mould? Is it preſumption for any man to know more than I do, or a ſin to know leſs? Job* doth well reprove this ſelf-conceit, *Job* 12. 2, 3. His friends would needs bear him down, and were very angry with him that he was not of their mind, and would not acknowledg all to be true of himſelf which they ſaid againſt him: he takes them up ſharply; *No doubt ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall dye with you: but I have underſtanding as well as you, and I am not inferiour to you: who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* Let not any man think that he hath ingroſſed all the knowledg of the world to himſelf, but others know the ſame things which he doth, and many things better than he.

9. In matters of *Commerce* and *Contracts*, which ariſe from thence: Now a *contract* is *a mutual transferring of right:* when I buy any thing of another, he makes over the right of ſuch a Commodity to me for ſo much money, or other valuable thing, the right whereof I make over to him. Now in this kind of intercourſe, we are to be governed by this great Rule. In *making* of contracts we muſt *agere bona fide*, deal honeſtly and truly: in *performing* of contracts we muſt give *liberare fidem*, ſatisfie the ingagement we have made, for thus we our ſelves would be dealt withall.

Now if any ſhall deſire to be more particularly ſatisfied, *What that exact Righteouſneſs is which in matter of Contracts ought to be obſerved be-*

 twixt

twixt man and man? I muſt confeſs this is a difficult queſtion, and to be handled very modeſtly, by ſuch as acknowledg themſelves unacquainted with the affairs of the world, and the neceſſities of things, and the particular and hidden reaſons of ſome kind of dealings: For he that is ignorant of theſe, may eaſily give Rules which will not comply with the affairs of the world; he may complain of that which cannot be otherwiſe; and blame ſome kind of dealings which are juſtifiable, from particular reaſons, not obvious to any man who is unſeen in the way of Trade: Beſides, there are many Caſes fall under this queſtion which are very nice, but of great conſequence, and the greater caution and tenderneſs ought to be uſed in the reſolution of them, becauſe they are matters of conſtant practiſe, and the greateſt part of mankind are concerned in them; now it is a dangerous thing to miſtake in thoſe things in which many perſons are intereſted, eſpecially if they be things of ſuch a vaſt difference, as *Good* and *Evil*, *Right* and *Wrong* are: For if that be determin'd to be lawful, which is unlawful, men are *led into ſin*; if that be determined to be unlawful, which is lawful, men are *led into a ſnare*; for if this determination be to the prejudice of men in their callings, it is an hundred to one but common example, and private intereſt, will make many continue in that practiſe; and then the miſchief is this, though men do that which is lawful and right, yet they are ſtaggered by the authority and confidence of him who hath determin'd it unlawful; and ſo have ſome relunctancy in their Conſciences in the doing of it, and this by accident becomes a great ſin to them; and when upon a Sick bed, or any other occaſion, they come to be touched with the ſenſe of ſin, this will be matter of greater horror and affrightment to them, than a real ſin which they committed ignorantly, and were afterwards convinced of. Upon all theſe Conſiderations, I ought to proceed with great warineſs in the anſwering of this queſtion, therefore I ſhall content my ſelf with ſpeaking thoſe things which are clear and evident, though they be but general, rather than venture out of my depth, by deſcending into particulars, and ſuch things as are out of my notice.

I ſhall therefore,

1. Lay down the General *Rule*.
2. Some *Propoſitions* which may tend to the explication of it.
3. Some ſpecial Rules for the directing of our Commerce and intercourſe.

1. The general *Rule* is this; *That which it is not unreaſonable for me to deſire to gain by another when I am to ſell, that I ſhould allow another to gain by me when I am to buy; and that which is not unreaſonable another ſhould gain by me when I am to buy, that, and no more, I may gain by another when I am to ſell.*

2. The *Propoſitions* which I ſhall lay down for the further explication of this Rule, are theſe:

1. *In Buying and Selling, ſuch a proportion of gain may be taken, and ought to be allowed, as is mutually and univerſally beſt.* And this every man is preſumed to deſire, becauſe this will be certainly good for every one,

one; whereas if it be not univerſally good, it may be bad for any one; if it be not mutually ſo, it will be bad for me by turns.

2. *That proportion of gain which allows a reaſonable compenſation for our times, and pains, and hazzard, is univerſally and mutually beſt.* If the compenſation be unreaſonably great, it will be bad for the buyer, if unreaſonably little, it will be bad for the ſeller; if equal and reaſonable, it will be good for all.

3. *That proportion of gain, which in common intercourſe and uſe of bargaining among thoſe who underſtand what they buy and ſell, is generally allowed, ought to be eſteemed a reaſonable compenſation.* This is evident, becauſe the common reaſon of mankind doth beſt determine what is reaſonable. Therefore thoſe who ſpeak of *commutative juſtice*, and place it *in the equality of things contracted for*, need explaining; for *value* is not a thing *abſolute* and *certain*, but *relative*, and *mutable*: Now to fix the value of things as much as may be, this *Rule* is commonly given, *Tanti unumquodque valet, quanti vendi poteſt, Every thing is worth ſo much as it may be ſold for*, which muſt not be underſtood too particularly, as if the preſent and particular appetite of the Contractor were to be the Rule, for every thing is not worth ſo much as any body will give for it, but ſo much as in common intercourſe among knowing perſons it will give. For this I take for a truth, that in the ordinary plenty of commodities, there is an ordinary and uſual price of them known to the underſtanding perſons of every profeſſion; If I be out in this, the matter of gain will be more uncertain than I thought on.

4. *A reaſonable compenſation doth not conſiſt in an indiviſible point, but hath a certain latitude which likewiſe is to be determined by the common intercourſe and practiſe of men.* Suppoſe ten in the hundred be the uſual gain made of ſuch a commodity, eleven the higheſt, nine the loweſt, the latitude is betwixt nine and eleven.

5. *Every man ingaged in a way of Commerce, is preſumed to underſtand, unleſs the contrary be evident.* So that keeping within the latitude of a lawful gain, I may uſe my skill againſt another man in driving a bargain. But if his want of skill be evident (that is) ſufficiently known to me, I muſt uſe him as I would do a child, or other unskilful perſon, that is, fairly.

6. *Where the price of things alters* (as it often doth almoſt in all things) *no other Rule can be given but the common and market-price.* There are ſome things which are fixedly certain, *as Coyn*; there I have no latitude at all; I may not put off a piece of money for more than its value, though a perſon out of ignorance would take it for more. There are ſome commodities which in ordinary plenty being of an ordinary goodneſs, have an uſual price; here I have but little latitude, *viz.* that of the market: In the riſing and falling of Commodities, I have a greater latitude, but uſually in theſe caſes the Market ſets ſome kind of price, unleſs I be the ſole Maſter of a commodity: and here the latitude is the greateſt, and my own reaſon and moderation muſt limit me: And if any ask why I make the Market the Rule, ſeeing this ſeems to be as if I ſhould ſay,

Let every man get as much as he can, for ſo men in the Market do; I anſwer, The market is uſually more reaſonable than the particular appetites of men; and though every man be apt to get as much as he can, yet men generally have an appetite to ſell, as well as to ſell dear, and that checks this, and men are brought to moderation, becauſe they are unwilling to loſe cuſtom; ſo that he that governs himſelf by the Market-prizes, not catching at particular advantages, ſeems to me to follow the ſafeſt Rule.

7. *There are ſome things allowed in common intercourſe, which are ſo rigorous, that they are hardly juſt*, which are rather tolerable than commendable. I will give one inſtance inſtead of many: A man hath a ſmall piece of ground lying within another mans eſtate, he is willing to ſell, but requires (poſſibly) forty or ſixtty years purchaſe, or more, according to the particular appetite of the purchaſer: This ſeems not to be ſo agreeable to this great rule of equity; I doubt not but ſome advantage may be made in this caſe, and I will not ſet any peremptory limits; I ſhall only ſay this in general, we ſhould ſet a moderate value upon another mans appetite and convenience.

8. *It is to be feared, that ſomething very like unrighteouſneſs, is woven into the myſteries of moſt Trades*; And like *Phidias* his Image in *Minerva*'s ſhield, cannot be defaced without the ruin of it. I think this is not a groundleſs jealouſie, but the confeſſion and complaint of the moſt knowing and underſtanding perſons in moſt humane affairs. I ſhall inſtance only in the *ſleightneſs of work, the imbaſing of Commodities, and ſetting them off by indirect advantages*. I can only bewail this; for unleſs the world could generally be convinced of this, it is not like to be amended. Perfection is not to be looked for in this imperfect ſtate, we muſt be content if things are paſſable.

9. *Nevertheleſs we ought to aſpire after as great a degree of Righteouſneſs and equity, as the condition of humane affairs will admit.* We ſhould bend all our endeavours to the bettering of the World, and not only avoid all unrighteouſneſs, but draw back as much as in us lies, from the indirect practiſes of the World, and from all appearance of unrighteouſneſs.

3. The more *Particular Rules* are theſe.

1. *Impoſe upon no mans ignorance or unskilfulneſs.* Thou mayeſt ſet a juſt value upon thine own Commodity, but not a price upon another mans head. I mean, thou mayeſt not rate a mans want of underſtanding, or ſet a tax upon his ignorance; therefore take no advantage of Children, or any other incompetent perſons, and do not only uſe them with juſtice, but with ingenuity, as thoſe that repoſe a truſt in you, and caſt themſelves upon your equity. And here are ſome queſtions to be reſolved.

Queſt. 1. *If a man be otherwiſe skilfull in his calling, may not I take advantage of his ignorance of a particular circumſtance wherein the contract is concerned?*

Anſw. I will tell you how *Tully* reſolves this in a particular caſe: *A man*

man (ſaith he) *brings a Ship of Corn from* Alexandria *to* Rhodes, *in a time of great Famine, he may have what price he will, he knows of a great many more Ships that will be there next day, may he conceal this from the* Rhodians? He determines peremptorily he may not. If we will be worſe than Heathens—I ſay no more. *De Officiis.* l. 3.

Queſt. 2. *But may we not take advantage of the ignorance of the ſeller, though not of the buyer?* The difference is, he that offers to ſell any thing at ſuch a price, is willing ſo to part with it; now *there is no wrong done to him that is willing.*

I anſwer, *A man is ſo far willing, as he is knowing*; *Ariſtotle* tells us, *That ignorance is a ſort of unwillingneſs.* If a man out of forgetfulneſs, or want of conſideration, or ſufficient underſtanding of his own calling, miſtake himſelf, I may not make a prize of this mans weakneſs; for he is only willing to ſell it ſo upon ſuppoſition he remembers right, and underſtands himſelf aright; but the thing being really worth more, he is abſolutely unwilling, and I am injurious to him in taking advantage.

Queſt. 3. *May I not ſell ſecret faults and vices in a commodity?*

Anſw. If the faults be ſuch as men take for granted do often happen, and notwithſtanding them, they do not account any man to have deceived them, then they are faults pardoned by common conſent; but if they be ſuch as I am grieved at, and think my ſelf not fairly dealt with-all when they happen, then ſome think it is enough to allow for them in the price; but I think *Tully* hath determined it better, *Ne quid omnino quod venditor novit emptor ignoret, That the buyer ſhould not be left ignorant of any thing that the ſeller knows:* And this ſeems reaſonable, for I know not but another man may value thoſe faults higher than I do; however it is not ſo fair for me to make another mans bargain. *Offic. lib. 3.*

2. *Impoſe upon no mans neceſſity.* If a man muſt needs buy *now*, or *of thee*, becauſe none elſe is near, make no advantage of this.

3. *When Gods providence hath put into thy hands ſome great opportunity and advantage* (as by the intervention of ſome unexpected Law, by a ſudden War or Peace betwixt Nations, or by ſome other caſualty) *do not ſtretch it to the utmoſt. Fortunam reverenter habe, Uſe this providential advantage modeſtly*, conſidering that he whoſe bleſſing gave thee this opportunity, can blaſt thee a thouſand ways.

4. *Uſe plainneſs in all your dealings:* This the *Roman Laws* called *bona fide agere*; Do not diſparage another mans commodity, or raiſe your own beſides truth, this is ſinful; do not inſinuate a commendation or diſparagement indirectly, thereby to lead a man into an error, that you may draw on a bargain the more eaſily; do not (as your phraſe is) ask or *bid much out of the way*, for if this be not ſimply unlawful, yet it doth not become an honeſt man: We commend the *Quakers* becauſe they are *at a word* in all their dealings; we would be loath not to be counted as good Chriſtians as they are; let us then do as good things as they do, eſpecially when we account thoſe things *praiſe-worthy*, and I am ſure *this* is no ways contrary to *Juſtice*, and *Honeſty*, and *Truth*:

I know

I know nothing that gives ſo real a reputation to that Sect, as this practice; and would it not adorn thoſe who account themſelves the more ſober Chriſtians? if we praiſe this in others, let us practiſe it in our ſelves. We are apt to value our ſelves much by our *Orthodox Judgments*, but let us take heed that *Sectaries* do not confute us by their *Orthodox lives*. For the ſake of Religion, *Next to your Conſciences, in all your dealings, tender your reputation:* for, *quod conſcientia eſt apud Deum, id fama eſt apud homines, that which conſcience is in reference to God, that our reputation is in reſpect of men.*

5. *In matters of vanity and fancy, and things which have no certain eſtimation, uſe moderation*; and ſo much the rather, becauſe in theſe thou art left to be thy own Judg.

6. *Do not go to the utmoſt of things lawful.* He that will always walk upon the brink, is in great danger of falling down: he that will do the utmoſt of what he may, will ſometime or other be tempted to what he ſhould not; for it is a ſhort and eaſie paſſage from the utmoſt limits of *lawful*, to what is *evil* and *unlawful*; therefore in that latitude which you have of gain, uſe *favour towards the poor and neceſſitous, ingenuity* towards the *ignorant and unskilful, moderation* towards *all men.*

7. *Where you have any doubt about the equity of dealings, chuſe you the ſafeſt part, and that which will certainly bring you peace:* For not only a good Conſcience, but a quiet Conſcience is to be valued above gain. Therefore in matters of duty do the moſt, in matters of privileg and diviſions of right, and proportions of gain (where there is any doubt) chuſe the leaſt, for this is always ſafe.

Thus I have laid down the *Rule* and explained it, and have given as particular directions as I could ſafely adventure to do; I muſt now leave it to every man to apply it more particularly to himſelf, and to deal faithfully with his own Conſcience, in the uſe of it. Circumſtances which vary Caſes, are infinite; therefore when all is done, much muſt be left to the Equity and Chancery of our own Breaſts. I have not told you how much in the Pound you may gain, and no more, nor can I: A man may make a greater gain at one time than another, of the ſame thing; he may take thoſe advantages which the change of things, and the providence of God gives him, uſing them moderately: A man may take more of ſome perſons than of others; provided a man uſe all men righteouſly, he may uſe ſome favourably. But I have on purpoſe forborn to deſcend to too many particularities, among other reaſons, for the ſake of Sir *Thomas More*'s obſervation concerning the Caſuiſts of his time, who (he ſaith) by their too particular reſolutions of Caſes, did not teach men *non peccare, not to ſin*, but did ſhew them *quam prope ad peccatum liceat accedere ſine peccato, how near men might come to ſin, and yet not ſin.*

The Uſes I ſhall make of all this, are theſe two.

1. *Uſe.*

Let us not revenge our ſelves; The Rule is not, we ſhould do to others as they do to us, but as we would have them to do to us: as if

if it were on purpoſe to prevent revenge. Saint *Luke* forbids revenge from this rule, *Luk.* 6. 31, 32, *For if you love them that love you, &c.* But love your Enemies. Revenge is the greateſt offence againſt this rule, for he that revengeth an injury, hath received one; he that hath received one, knows beſt what that is which he would not have another to do to him; the nature of evil and injury is better known to the patient, than to the agent; men know better what they ſuffer, than what they do: he that is injur'd, feels it, and knows how grievous it is, and will he do that to another?

2. *Uſe.*

Let me preſs this rule upon you; Live by it in all your carriage and dealings with men, let it be preſent to you. Ask your ſelves upon every occaſion, Would I that another ſhould deal thus with me, and carry himſelf thus towards me? But I ſhall preſs this chiefly as to juſtice and righteouſneſs in our commerce. It is ſaid that *Severus* the Emperor cauſed this rule to be written upon his Palace, and in all publick places; let it be writ upon our Houſes and Shops, and Exchanges. This Exhortation is not altogether improper for this Auditory; you that frequent theſe Exerciſes, ſeem to have a good ſenſe of that part of Religion which is contained in the firſt Table; do not by your violations of the ſecond, mar your obedience to the firſt; do not prove your ſelves Hypocrites in the firſt Table, by being wicked in the ſecond; give not the World juſt cauſe to ſay, That you are ungodly, becauſe they find you to be unrighteous, but manifeſt your love to God whom you have not ſeen, by your love to your Brother whom you have ſeen; and if any man wrong his Brother, he cannot love him. Do not reject or deſpiſe this Exhortation, under the contemptuous name of *Morality*. Our Saviour tells us, this is a chief part of that which hath ever been accounted Religion in the World, *It is the Law and the Prophets*; and he by injoyning it, hath adopted it into Chriſtianity, and made it Goſpel. We ſhould have an eſpecial love to this precept, not only as it is the dictate of Nature, and the Law of *Moſes*, not only as it is a Jewiſh, and Gentile principle, but as it is of the *Houſhold of Faith*. When the young man told Chriſt, that *he had kept the Commandments from his youth*, it is ſaid *Jeſus loved him*; whereever we have learned to deſpiſe *morality*, Jeſus loved it: When I read the Heathen-writers, eſpecially *Tully* and *Seneca*, and take notice what precepts of morality, and Laws of kindneſs are every where in their writings, I am ready to fall in love with them. How ſhould it make our blood to riſe in many of our faces who are Chriſtians, to hear with what ſtrictneſs *Tully* determines caſes of Conſcience, and how generouſly he ſpeaks of equity and juſtice towards all men. *Societatis arctiſſimum vinculum eſt magis arbitrari eſſe contra naturam, hominem homini detrahere ſui commodi cauſa, quam omnia incommoda ſubire; This is the ſtrongeſt bond of ſociety, to account it to be more againſt nature for any man to wrong another for his own advantage, than to undergo the greateſt inconveniences.* And again; *Non enim mihi eſt vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectus neminem, ut violem commodi mei gratia. Nor is my life more dear and profitable to me, than ſuch a temper and diſpoſition of mind as that I would not wrong*

Lampridius.

Mark 10. 20, 21.

Offic. Lib. 3.

wrong any man for my own advantage. Again, *Tollendum eſt in rebus contrahendis omne mendacium, No kind of lying muſt be uſed in bargaining.* And to mention no more; *Nec ut emat melius, nec ut vendat quicquam ſimulabit, aut diſſimulabit vir bonus; A good man will not counterfeit, or conceal any thing, that he may buy the cheaper, or ſell the dearer.* And yet further, to check our proneneſs to deſpiſe Moral Righteouſneſs, I cannot but mention an excellent paſſage to this purpoſe, which I have met with in a Learned man of our own Nation. *Two things* (ſaith he) *make up a Chriſtian, a true Faith, and an honeſt Converſation; and though the former uſually gives us the Title, the latter is the ſurer; for true Profeſſion without an honeſt Converſation, not only ſaves not, but increaſeth our weight of puniſhment; but a good life without true profeſſion, though it brings us not to Heaven, yet it leſſens the meaſure of our judgment: ſo that a Moral man, ſo called, is a Chriſtian by the ſurer ſide.* And afterwards, *I confeſs* (ſaith he) *I have not yet made that proficiency in the Schools of our Age, as that I could ſee why the ſecond Table, and the Acts of it, are not as properly the parts of Religion and Chriſtianity, as the Acts and obſervation of the firſt; if I miſtake, then it is Saint* James *that hath abuſed me, for he deſcribing Religion by its proper Acts, tells us, That pure Religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs and the Widow in their affliction, and to keep himſelf unſpotted from the World; ſo that that thing which in an eſpecial refined Dialect of the new Chriſtian Language, ſignifies nothing but Morality and Civility, that in the Language of the Holy Ghoſt imports true Religion,* Mark 12. 33, 34. When the Scribe told Chriſt, that *to love God with all the heart,* &c. *And our neighbour as our ſelves, was more than whole burnt-offerings and ſacrifices;* it is ſaid, *when Jeſus ſaw that he anſwered diſcreetly, he ſaid unto him, thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.* They that would have a Religion without Moral righteouſneſs, talk *indiſcreetly,* and are farther from the Kingdom of God than a meer Moral man. If we neglect this part of Religion, we diſparage the Goſpel, and abuſe our profeſſion; we are but pretenders to Chriſtianity. *Plutarch* ſpeaks ſomewhere to this purpoſe, he had rather poſterity ſhould ſay, There was never ſuch a man as *Plutarch,* than that he was a vicious, or cruel, or unjuſt man.

Mr. Hales.

I had rather a man ſhould not call himſelf a Chriſtian, that he ſhould renounce his Title, than that by his life and actions he ſhould repreſent Chriſtians to the world, as oppreſſors, as unjuſt, and treacherous dealers. If men will only uſe Religion for to cover their unrighteouſneſs, I had rather they would put off their cloaks, and be knaves *in querpo,* that every body may know them, than that they ſhould go like High-way-men in Vizards and Diſguiſes, only that they may rob honeſt men the more ſecurely.

And to move you to the practice of this Rule, I ſhall only offer to you one Conſideration, but which hath ſo much weight in it, that it may be inſtead of many; *As you deal with others, ſo ye ſhall be dealt with.* With what meaſure you mete to others, it ſhall be meaſured to you, is a proverbial ſpeech often uſed by our Saviour, and which one time or other you will find to be very ſignificant. God doth many times by his providence order things ſo, that in this life mens unrighteouſneſs returns upon their own heads, and their violent dealing upon their own pates. There is a Divine *Nemeſis* which brings

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our iniquities upon our ſelves. No man hath any vice or humour alone, but it may be matched in the world, either in its own kind, or in another; if a man be cruel and inſolent, *A Bajazet ſhall meet with a Tamberlane*; if a man delight to jeer and abuſe others, *no man hath ſo good a wit, but another hath as good a memory*; He will remember it to revenge it. He that makes a trade of deceiving and cozening others, he doth but teach others to cozen him; and there are but few Maſters in any kind, but are out-done by ſome of their Scholars. But however we may eſcape the hands of men, how ſhall we eſcape our own Conſciences, either trouble of Conſcience in this life, or the worm of Conſcience in the next? how ſhall we eſcape the hands of the living God? how ſhall we eſcape the Damnation of Hell? 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 6, *Let no man go beyond, or defraud his Brother in any matter, for God is the avenger of all ſuch.* He will take their cauſe into his own hands, and render to us according to our fraudulent and cruel dealing with others, *Matt.* 18. 35, *So likewiſe ſhall my Heavenly Father do alſo unto you*, &c. What our Saviour ſaith, *Matt.* 19. 29. That there is no man that denies himſelf in Houſes or Lands, *&c.* for Chriſts ſake and the Goſpels, but ſhall receive in this life a hundred-fold, and in the world to come everlaſting life, is true alſo here. There is no man that is injurious to his Brother, in houſes, or lands, or good name, or any other thing, but ſhall probably receive in this world an hundred-fold; however (without repentance) in the world to come, everlaſting miſery. In the next world men will find, that they have but impoveriſhed themſelves by their ill-gotten wealth, and heaped up for themſelves treaſures of wrath: Read thoſe words and tremble at them, *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miſery ſhall come upon you*, &c.

Let us then be perſwaded, as we love God whom we have not ſeen, as we love the Goſpel which we read and hear every day, and would preſerve the reputation of it; as we would better the world, and the condition of mankind; as we love our ſelves, and our own peace and happineſs, to deal juſtly and equally with all men. Till we come to live by this Rule of Equity, we can never hope to ſee the world a quiet habitation. But if this were practiſed among us, then *Glory would dwell in our Land, Mercy and Truth would meet together, Righteouſneſs and Peace would kiſs each other; Truth would* Pſal. 185. 9. *ſpring out of the Earth, and Righteouſneſs would look down from Heaven; yea* 10, 11, 12, 13. *the Lord would give that which is good, and our Land would yield her increaſe: Righteouſneſs would go before him, and ſet us in the way of his ſteps.*

After what manner muſt we give Alms, that they may be acceptable and pleaſing unto God?

1 Tim. VI. 17, 18, 19.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor truſt in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate.

Laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

THE ſum of theſe words is *a Direction for rich men how to make the beſt uſe of their riches*]. The ground or occaſion of this Direction, is to meet with an Objection, which might be made againſt the diſcommodities and dangers of Riches, noted before in *ver.* 9, 10, *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts, which drown men in deſtruction and perdition.* Ver. 10, *For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while ſome coveted after, they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows.* From hence ſome might infer, as the Diſciples did from the inſeperable and inviolable bond of Marriage, noted by our Saviour, *Matt.* 19, *If*, ſay they, *the caſe of the man be ſo with his wife, it is not good to marry.* So might ſome ſay, If they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a ſnare, *&c.* then it is not good to be rich; yea, ſuch as are rich may ſay, Let us give away, or caſt away all that we have, rather than retain ſuch Vipers, as Riches ſeem to be.

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To prevent such inconsequent inferences, the Apostle giveth this Direction, whereby he sheweth that Riches may be well used, and being well used, be a means of helping on our Eternal salvation. Learn hence not to condemn things good in themselves, because of the abuse of them. The Lord in regard of the ordinary abuse of Riches, styleth them *Mammon of unrighteousness*, and yet adviseth not thereupon to cast them away, but to *make to our selves friends thereof*; that is, so to use them, as the good works done by them, may, as friends before the Judg, give evidence of the truth of our Faith and Love, and shew that we are of the sheep of Christ, for whom Eternal life is purchased. Luk. 16. 9.

Having thus shewed the occasion and dependance of these words upon the former, come we now to the Logical resolution of them; where we may observe two parts.

1. A *Prohibition*. 2. An *Injunction*.

A *Prohibition* of hurtful Vices.

An *Injunction* of needful Virtues.

The vices are two, { 1. *High-mindedness*. 2. *Vain-confidence*.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches. The virtues are likewise two.

1. *Confidence or Faith in God*; *but trust in God*, which is urged by an Argument taken from Gods bounty, in these words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*.

2. *Charity towards men*, expressed in several phrases, *viz. by doing good, and by being rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate*; which duties are inforced by an Argument taken from the benefit of performing them, which is, in brief, assurance of Eternal life, implied in these words, *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on Eternal life*.

I shall briefly speak something to the several branches of the Text, as they lye in order, and then come to the question or Case of Conscience given unto me to handle.

Charge them that are rich in this world: The expression of our Apostle is here observable, in that he saith not λέγε, speak to them, not ἀπάγγελλε, declare to them, but παραγγέλλε, charge, command them. Well did the Apostle know how forward on the one side rich men are to be high-minded, and to trust in their riches; and on the other side, how backward they are to trust in God, and to shew charity to the poor; and thereupon saw it requisite that a Minister should take courage to himself, and not think it enough, closely to intimate to rich men, what vices they are addicted to, or what virtues they are bound unto, but remembring the place wherein they stand, which is Gods, in the Name of his most excellent Majesty, to require, charge, and command them to forbear the one, and indeavour after the other. παραγγέλλε

In the next place follows the parties to whom this charge is to be given, namely, To the rich in this world, *Charge them*, saith the Apostle, *who are rich in this world*, that is, in this present world; noting our

riches to be only for this world; for true is that Proverb of the Wiſe-
Prov. 27. 24. man, *Riches are not for ever*, they cannot be carried out of this world.
Job 1. 21. *As naked we came into this world, ſo naked ſhall we go out of it.* And therefore it muſt needs be a point of great wiſdom by that which is but for this preſent world, to ſtore up a ſure foundation for the time to come.

In the next place follows the Vices here forbidden: the firſt is, *High-mindedneſs*, whereunto rich men are very prone, in that their wealth is as wind, and though wind be but a vapour, yet it puffeth up exceedingly, as we ſee in a bladder blown up with wind. In like manner, Riches,
Eccleſ. 1. 2. though they be but *meer vanity*, as the wiſe man expreſſeth it, yet are they apt to puff up men extreamly, even to think of themſelves above what is meet. Whereas if rich men would but well weigh, that they
Gen. 3. 19. came from, and muſt return to the ſame mould that others do; *for duſt they are, and to duſt they muſt return*; Yea, if they would conſider, that they came from the ſame curſed ſtock that others do, and are by nature no better than the meaneſt; eſpecially if they would conſider, that outward riches cannot add the leaſt dram of real worth to the owners of them; but though they may be more honourable parts or members in the civil body of the ſtate, yet in the myſtical body of Chriſt they may be leſs honourable than the poor; I ſay, if rich men did but ſeriouſly conſider theſe things, they would not be ſo high-minded as they are.

The other Vice here forbidden unto rich men, is, *Vain-confidence*, or *truſting in their riches*, and this is very fitly joyned to the former; for where our pride is, there will be our confidence. That rich men are apt to put too much truſt and confidence in their riches, doth appear by the titles which they commonly give unto them, calling them *their goods*, as if they were the only good things; and *their ſubſtance*, as if all things elſe were ſhadows; and by the increaſe of them, they ſay they are made for ever; and by the loſs of them, they ſay they are utterly undone. What do theſe expreſſions imply, but a truſt and confidence in
Prov. 18. 11. their Riches? whereupon ſaith the wiſe man, *The rich mans wealth is his ſtrong City, and as an high wall in his own conceit.* It makes him think himſelf ſo ſafe and ſecure, that like the Judg mentioned by our Saviour,
Luk. 18. 2. *he feareth not God, nor regardeth man.*

In the next place follows the Virtues enjoyned.

The firſt is *Confidence, or faith in God*, which is directly oppoſed to truſt in Riches, ſo as rich men may have wherein to truſt, though they truſt not in Riches. God is the God of the Rich, as well as of the Poor, and the one as well as the other, are to put their whole truſt in him.

And if we conſider the property here given to God, *viz. Living, but truſt in the living God*; we ſhall ſee good reaſon to truſt in God, rather than in Riches. For our wealth may vaniſh away, but he ever liveth; our wealth may prove our bane, but he is both the giver and preſerver of life. Our truſting in God is here preſſed by an Argument taken from Gods

Gods bounty to us in theſe words, *who giveth us richly all things to enjoy*: So that the Lord is not only a *Living*, but alſo a *Giving* God, of whoſe gift you have not only your life, but alſo your riches; yea, all that you have is the gift of God, who giveth you not only all needful things, but alſo *Richly*, and as St. *James* ſaith, *liberally*. For God in his gifts ſheweth himſelf to be a God, and that two ways. 1. In the freeneſs. 2. In the greatneſs of them, *He loadeth us with benefits*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. This Rich bounty of God is a further motive to draw you to truſt in him. James 1. 5. Pſal. 68. 19.

Yea, the Apoſtle addeth, that the Lord giveth us all things richly *to enjoy*; that is, not only for the preſent to ſpend, as being abſolutely neceſſary; but alſo to lay up and reſerve, ſo as it is not unlawful to lay up for after-times. The Apoſtle preſſeth it on Parents as a bounden Duty, *to lay up for their Children*. 2 Cor. 12. 14.

Only let this lawful liberty be limited with theſe and ſuch like bounds.

1. That we lay up nothing but what is juſtly gotten. To lay up Riches of unrighteouſneſs, is to kindle a fire that may deſtroy both our temporal and our ſpiritual eſtate.

2. That we be not ſo covetous of hoarding up, as to deny our ſelves what is needful for our uſe and comfort, or to deny the poor what is needful and neceſſary for them; but that we willingly give out, as what is meet for our ſelves, ſo what is neceſſary to the poor.

3. That in our treaſuring up, we aim not meerly, wholly, and only at our ſelves, but withall have an eye, as to the charge which in particular God hath committed to us, ſo alſo to the Church, Common-wealth, and Poor for the time to come.

4. That we exceed not meaſure in our treaſure, no though we aim at the fore-mentioned good ends.

So much for the clearing the firſt Duty the Apoſtle would have preſſed upon Rich men eſpecially, which is to *Truſt in God*.

The ſecond is *Charity towards men*, expreſſed in ſeveral phraſes, as firſt *by doing good*.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good. So that true Charity conſiſteth not only in compaſſionate affections, and kind ſpeeches, but in good deeds, as the word in the Original implieth.

You Rich men ought *to be rich in good works*, as the Apoſtle addeth. For God expecteth fruit anſwerable to the ſeed which he ſoweth. He giveth you plenty of ſeed, therefore you muſt be plentiful in this kind of fruit. ἀγαθοεργεῖν

The next branches, *Ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, ſet forth the manner of our charity.

The former implying *a wiſe diſtribution of our Alms*; for *to diſtribute* is not hand over head, without conſideration to give, but according to the need of them to whom we give. The latter implying a willingneſs therein. As by diſtributing, good is done to others; ſo by willingneſs therein, much comfort is brought unto our own ſouls, and grace to

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2 Cor. 9. 7. the work; and God doth beſt accept ſuch, for *he loveth a chearful willing giver.*

In the next place follows the Reaſons, to enforce the fore-named Duties taken from the benefit of performing them, which is in brief, aſſurance of eternal life, implied in theſe words, *Laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.* The Apoſtle here, for their better encouragement to lay out a portion of their eſtate on good works, telleth them that they are ſo far from loſing what they ſo lay out, as in truth *they lay up thereby in ſtore for themſelves.*

Yea they lay up a good foundation, that is, ſuch a treaſure as is like a foundation in the ground, that cannot be ſhaken or overthrown. This treaſure the Apoſtle thus expreſſeth, in oppoſition to the fore-mentioned uncertainty of Riches. So as by a chearful diſtribution of this worlds wealth, they do indeed but exchange uncertainties for certainties, and ſo no fear of loſing by ſuch bargains. Yea, *they thereby obtain eternal life.*

Queſt. *Are then good works the cauſe of eternal life?*

Anſw. Surely, No; only they are the means and way of attaining thereto; and in this ſenſe is this phraſe here uſed; *That they may lay hold on eternal life:* Having thus ſhewed you the *occaſion* of the words; the *logical Reſolution* of them, their *ſenſe and meaning*;

I ſhould now according to my accuſtomed method, come to ſuch points of Doctrine which the words do naturally afford unto us; But I muſt wave them, and fall upon that *Queſtion,* or *caſe of conſcience,* which was given me to handle, *viz.*

Queſt. *How, or after what manner muſt we give alms, that they may be acceptable, and pleaſing unto God?* In the reſolving whereof, I ſhall endeavour to anſwer moſt of the caſes of conſcience about Alms-giving.

Anſw. 1. It muſt be *with juſtice,* giving only of our own, whereunto we have a juſt right and title: ſo much our Saviour implieth in that precept of his, where he ſaith, *Give alms of ſuch things as you have,* whereby is not meant ſuch things as a man hath by him (for one may have another mans things by him) but ſuch things as are his own, whereunto he hath a juſt title, and undoubted right; whereof he is the lawful proprietor, hath the power of diſpoſing thoſe things, and thoſe only he may lawfully and juſtly give away.

Luk. 11. 41.

This Caveat is very neceſſary for many Reaſons.

1. Becauſe otherwiſe we ſhall ſever mercy from juſtice, which ſhould always go hand in hand. God hath put them together; *Prov.* 21. 21. *Dan.* 4. 27. and we muſt not put them aſunder; indeed they are two links of one and the ſame chain, of which other virtues and graces are alſo other links; So many virtues, ſo many links: Now if one link of a chain fall off, the whole chain is broken, and down falls that which is drawn or held up by it: ſo we that are held up out of the pit of deſtruction by the chains of graces, are in danger to fall into it, if one grace be violated and ſevered from the reſt.

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2. By giving that which is not our own, the excellency and glory of Charity is loſt; of ſuch Charity it may be ſaid, *Icabod*, where is the glory? The glory of Charity conſiſts in this, that we are willing to part with our own, and therein to damnifie our ſelves for the relief and ſuccour of others. 1 Sam. 4. 21.

3. By giving that which is not our own, we do wrong, and thereby make our ſelves liable to reſtitution; ſo as Charity in ſuch a caſe, is a plain Injury. It is a caſe wherein recompence of Revenge may more be feared, than recompence of Reward expected.

Queſt. *Who may be ſaid to give that which is not their own?*

Anſw. They who filch, ſteal, or rob for this very end: As Parents for Children, or Children for Parents, or one friend for another. It is a ſin for one to ſteal to ſatisfie his own hunger, much more is it ſin to ſteal for another; certainly it is a great wickedneſs to do injuſtice, that we may do acts of Charity. Prov. 6 31.

2. *Such as having raiſed up an eſtate, or got ſomething by indirect and unjuſt means, as by lying, ſwearing, falſe weights, deceitful meaſures, and the like: think to make up all by giving part to the Poor.* For as the *Civilians* ſay well, *The good uſe doth not juſtifie the unjuſt getting of their goods.* And can any imagine that God will be pleaſed with thoſe mens charity, who give relief out of that which they have wrongfully gotten? reſtitution ſhould rather be made to ſuch as have been wronged. And if neither the parties wronged, nor their heirs can be found, then what hath been wrongfully got, ought to be given to the Poor, as their heirs. An example whereof we have in *Zacheus*, who having wronged many by oppreſſion, after his converſion, offereth four-fold reſtitution unto all whom he had wronged; and becauſe many could not be found, to whom he ſhould make it, he offereth to beſtow half of his goods to the relief of the poor. *Bonus uſus non juſtificat injuſte quæſita.* Luk. 19. 8.

3. *Such as being under authority, and having no propriety in the things which they give, do notwithſtanding give directly againſt, or ſimply without the conſent of thoſe who have the true propriety; do not give of their own;* Servants, Children, and others. Indeed Servants and Children, may lawfully give out of that which is their own, but not out of that which is their Maſters or Parents, without their allowance.

4. *Such as being joyned in Partnerſhip with another, and give Alms out of the Common ſtock without the conſent of their Partners, do not give that which is their own.*

5. *Such as are in extream debt, and owe more than they are worth.* We ſhewed, that mercy and juſtice muſt go together; yea, juſtice muſt go before mercy, and be ſatisfied before mercy be ſhewed. They who owe more than they are worth, have nothing at all to give for Alms, ſuch joyn Arrogancy to Injuſtice, to make ſhew of a great eſtate, and yet have none.

I ſhall cloſe this with a word of advice to ſuch as have a merciful and charitable diſpoſition, above their outward condition and ability; That they uſe the beſt diligence they can, by all lawful and warrantable means, to get ſomething to beſtow upon charitable uſes. Let poor labouring-

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men take ſo much the more pains, that they may have ſomewhat to give;
Eph. 4. 20. let ſervants ſpare out of their wages; let ſuch as have no propriety in any thing, but are wholly maintained by them under whom they live, as Children, Apprentices, and others, do what they can to obtain ſomething of their Parents, or other Governours, even for this very end, that they may have ſomething to give. Let ſuch as are in debt, firſt pay their Debts, and then give Alms. Let ſuch as have any way defrauded others, firſt make reſtitution, and then relieve them that are in need. Finally, let ſuch as live at the extent of their eſtate, and much more, ſuch as live beyond their means, well weigh wherein they may cut off ſome of their expences to beſtow on the Poor.

II. Alms-giving muſt be *with freedom and chearfulneſs*, and not grudgingly; The phraſe of *giving Alms*, frequently mentioned in Scripture, implieth as much, for to give, is freely to beſtow. In the Law, this propriety of *giving*, is plainly expreſſed, and by the contrary thus explained,
Deut. 15. 10. *Thou ſhalt freely give him, and thine heart ſhall not be grieved when thou giveſt unto him.* It is alſo implied under this phraſe, *Thou ſhalt open thy*
Verſe 11. *hand wide.* Alms muſt not be wreſted and wrung out of a mans hand, but he muſt of himſelf *open his hand*; that is, freely give. The word *wide* addeth emphaſis. And in the Goſpel we find it commanded by the
2 Cor. 9, 7. Apoſtle, *Every man according as he purpoſeth in his heart, ſo let him give, not grudgingly, or of neceſſity, for God loveth a chearful giver.*

Many motives may be produced to induce us hereunto: as,

1. *The pattern of God our Heavenly Father, and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Redeemer.*

All the good that the Father doth, he doth moſt freely; Who hath firſt given unto him? The word which is uſed to ſet out that which God
Rom 5.15, 16. giveth, ſignifieth *a free gift*; and he is ſaid to *love us freely*, Hoſ. 14.
τὸ χάρισμα 4, *To juſtifie us freely*, Rom. 3. 24, *and freely to give us all things,*
Id quod gratificando aliquis donat. Rom. 8. 32.

This Reaſon of Gods love, *The Lord ſet his love upon you, becauſe he*
Deut. 7. 7, 8. *loved you*, doth clearly demonſtrate the freeneſs of it.

The good alſo which the Son of God, Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour doth for us, he doth moſt freely upon his own love, without any deſert of ours:
Eph. 5, 2, 25. in this reſpect it is ſaid, that he hath *loved us, and hath given himſelf for us.* The conjunction of theſe two, *love* and *giving*, plainly prove the freeneſs of the gift. But further he expreſly ſaith concerning the freeneſs
Rev. 21. 5. of his gift; *I will give unto him that is athirſt, of the fountain of the water*
Ch. 22. 17. *of life freely.*

2. A ſecond Motive may be taken *from the nature of Charity, which unleſs it be free, is not true and ſound.* Thus much the Apoſtle implieth un-
1 Cor. 13. 3. der this phraſe, *Though I beſtow all my goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* By *Charity* he meaneth a free-giving of that which is given, meerly out of love and pity to him, unto whom he giveth.

3. Free-giving makes that which is given to man acceptable to God,
2 Cor. 9. 7. for *God loveth a chearful giver.* Yea, God hath more reſpect to this man-

manner of giving, than to the greatneſs of the gift. *For if there be firſt a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* Chap. 8. 12.

4. *A free manner of giving, makes the gift the more acceptable to him that is made partaker thereof.* As the gift ſupplieth his want, ſo the manner of giving reviveth his ſpirit. The Apoſtle rejoyceth in the Lord greatly, upon that care which the *Philippians* ſhewed to him in his neceſſity. Phil. 4. 10.

5. *A free and chearful giving, much redoundeth to the glory of God,* in that others are ſtirred up to praiſe God for ſuch gifts. *David* praiſed Gods glorious name, when he ſaw his people offer willingly unto the Lord. And this in reſpect, the Apoſtle ſaith of ſuch benevolence, that it is *abundant by many thanksgivings unto God.* 1 Chron. 28. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 9. 2. & 12.

III. *With ſimplicity and ſincerity*, according to that of the Apoſtle, *He that giveth, let him do it with ſimplicity*; that is, with an honeſt, plain, and ſincere heart, not aiming therein at his own praiſe, or applauſe, but at the glory of God, doing it in obedience to his command. This ſimplicity in giving, our Saviour hinteth unto us, where he ſaith, *When thou doſt Alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth:* that is, let not the neareſt that may be unto thee, know what thou giveſt. The right hand is that hand wherewith we ordinarily give, yet the left hand is often aſſiſtant to it. Now though there ſhould be any ſo near unto thee, as to be helpful and aſſiſtant, or at hand; yet let them not know it, make known thy charity to none. Rom. 12. 8. Mat. 6. 3.

Queſt. *May we not give Alms if others be by?*

Anſw. Yea, if need ſo require; as at publick Collections, or when in publick we ſee one ſtand in need. But we may not do it with a mind to have it known, our mind muſt be free from all ſuch conceit, and we muſt ſo do it, as if we were alone. *That Alms is not unacceptable which is given and ſeen of men, but that which is given to be ſeen of men.* So that the ſcope of our Saviour in the fore-mentioned place, is to take us off from all vain glory, in giving of our Alms, that as much as in us lieth, we ſhould endeavour to hide and conceal our good works from the eye of the world. *Non eſt ingrata eleemoſyna quæ fit & videtur, ſed quæ fit ut videatur.*

IV. Our Alms muſt be given *with a compaſſionate heart, with bowels of affection.* The *Greek* word for *Alms* is derived from a word that ſignifies *Mercy*, which intimateth the diſpoſition of the giver, how he ſhould be a *merciful* man, whoſe bowels are moved at the miſery of another, and thereupon contributes to his need with bowels of compaſſion. ἐλεημόσυνη *ab* ἔλεος *miſericordia.*

In giving, we muſt not only open our hands, but our hearts alſo in pity and compaſſion; We *muſt draw out our own ſouls* (as the Prophet ſpeaketh) as well as *our purſes, to the hungry and afflicted*; which is implied under ſeveral expreſſions of Charity, uſed in Scripture by the Holy Ghoſt, as, *He that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he.* And again, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord.* And ſaith the Apoſtle Saint *Paul, put on, as the Elect of God, bowels of mercy.* And ſaith the beloved Diſciple St. *John, Who ſo hath this worlds goods, and ſeeth his* Pſal. 58. 10. Prov. 14. 21. Chap. 19. 17. Col. 3. 12. 1 Joh. 3. 17.

Brother hath need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? It is not ſufficient to have an open libera hand, unleſs we have alſo an open and compaſſionate heart; for if the Sacrifice of our Alms-deeds be not mingled with the oyl and incenſe of mercy and compaſſion, it will not be acceptable unto God, who will have Mercy as well as Sacrifice. In contributing therefore to the relief of the poor, let our *inward affection* go along with our *outward action.*

Beneficentia ex benevolentia manare debet. Affectus tuus nomen imponit operi tuo. Amb. Offic. 30.

As helps hereunto,

1. *Be well informed in the benefit that compaſſion bringeth,* and that not only to thy diſtreſſed Brother, who is ſuccoured, but alſo to thy ſelf, to whom in this caſe a promiſe of mercy is made; *Bleſſed are the merciful, for they ſhall obtain mercy:* Mercy from other men, and mercy from God himſelf.

Mat. 5. 7.

Eccleſ. 9. 2.

2. *Well weigh the common condition of all,* how *all things come alike to all,* as the Wiſe-man ſpeaketh; ſo as thou alſo art ſubject to the ſame diſtreſs whereunto others are brought; and therefore as *Aquinas* ſaith, we ſhould have compaſſion on other mens miſery, *for the poſſibility of ſuffering the like;* Which argument the Apoſtle uſeth to the *Hebrews*, ſaying, *Remember them which ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves alſo in the body;* that is, ſay ſome, as being members of the ſame body; but rather, as *Beza* and others interpret the place, *as being your ſelves in the body of fleſh and frailty, ſubject to the like miſeries;* for ſo long as we dwell here in theſe houſes of Clay, and carry about us this earthly Tabernacle, we are all ſubject to the like changes and chances; which made old learned *Theodoret* to reach his helping hand to thoſe out-caſt *Africans*; *For when I ſaw* (quoth he) *their pitiful eſtate, I began to lay to heart the doubtful turnings and inverſions of humane things, and to fear leſt I my ſelf might fall into the like evils.*

Propter poſſibilitatem ſimilia patiendi. Tho. 2a, 2æ, queſt. 3. art. 2.

Heb. 13. 3. *Ut qui ſitis & ipſi iiſdem calamitatibus obnoxii.* Beza in loc. Theo. Ep. 29.

V. Our Alms muſt be given *ſeaſonably*; for as the Wiſe-man ſpeaketh, *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and every thing is beautiful only in its time and ſeaſon:* And therefore it will be our wiſdom ſo to obſerve the needs and neceſſities of other men, that we do not let ſlip any ſeaſon or opportunity of doing good. According to the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *As we have opportunity, let us do good.* The word in the Original tranſlated *opportunity*, properly ſignifies a *ſeaſonable time.*

Eccleſ. 3. 1, 11.

Gal. 6. 10. καιρὸν.

Queſt. *Which are the moſt ſeaſonable times of doing works of mercy?*

Anſw. 1. When accidentally thou meeteſt with any fit objects of mercy, thou muſt not then paſs them by with the *Prieſt* and *Levite*, but with the good *Samaritan*, preſently pour the Oyl and Wine of thy charity into the wounds of thy Brother, forthwith contributing ſomewhat to his relief: For miſery being the proper object of mercy, thou ſhouldſt then extend thy mercy unto ſuch as are in want and miſery.

Luk. 10. 31, 32, 33, 34.

2. *When God by his providence hath any way bleſſed and encreaſed thy ſtock and ſtore*, by proſpering thy adventure at Sea, or thy trading at home, or by ſome great Legacy bequeathed thee by ſome of thy friends, that is a ſeaſonable time for thee to give out freely and liberally to the relief of

of the poor, in teſtimony of thy thankfulneſs unto God for his bounty towards thee. I know it is uſual with moſt men upon the encreaſe of their ſtock and ſtore, to ſacrifice to their own nets, to aſcribe their wealth to their own wit and policy, and to ſay in their hearts, *Their power, and the might of their hand hath gotten them this wealth.* But mark what *Moſes* ſaith in the next verſe, 18, *Thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God, it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth.* Seeing therefore what thou haſt, thou haſt received from God, whatſoever the means and inſtruments were of conveying it unto thee, is it not moſt juſt and equal, that in way of thankfulneſs thou ſhouldſt ſet apart ſome portion thereof for the poor and needy? Deut. 8. 17.

3. *The Lords Day is another ſeaſonable time of doing works of mercy,* according to the Apoſtles Rule and Direction; *Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even ſo do ye. Upon the firſt day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in ſtore, as God hath proſpered him.* Where by *the firſt day of the week,* is meant the *Lords Day,* on which the Apoſtle enjoyneth the *Corinthians to lay up ſomething in ſtore*; implying thereby, that that is a very fit ſeaſon, not only to do ſuch works of mercy, which are then offered unto us, but alſo to prepare for other times. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

4. *Days of thanksgiving* for ſome eminent mercy, are another ſeaſonable time of doing works of Mercy. The remembering of the poor at ſuch times, is expreſly commanded in Scripture; *Thou ſhalt rejoyce in thine heart, thou and thy Son, and thy Daughter, and thy Man-ſervant, and thy Maid-ſervant, and the Levites, the Stranger, and the Fatherleſs, and the Widow:* Here the Stranger, the Fatherleſs, the Widow, are commanded to rejoyce on their days of Feaſting, which pre-ſuppoſeth the Rich mens ſending portions of their good cheer unto them, which was the practice of the people of God, as appeareth by that command of *Nehemiah* to the *Jews* on a day of Thankſgiving; *Go your way, eat the fat and drink the ſweet, and ſend portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared.* And their day of thankſgiving from *Haman's* conſpiracy, is called *a day of feaſting, and of ſending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor.* And what more ſeaſonable time can there be for ſhewing mercy to the poor, than when we are bleſſing God for his manifold mercies vouchſafed unto us? Deut. 16. 14. Neh. 8. 10. Eſth. 9. 22.

5. *Days of Faſting and Prayer,* are another ſeaſonable time of doing works of mercy. For how can we expect that God ſhould ſhew mercy unto us in removing thoſe judgments which we feel, or in preventing thoſe which we fear; if we will not ſhew mercy to our poor Brethren, who ſtand in need of our relief? In the day of our faſting therefore, let us at leaſt give away to the poor, ſo much as we ſave by our Faſt. For as St. *Auſtin* in one of his Sermons ſaith, * *Then are our faſts acceptable to God, if they which faſt out of neceſſity, becauſe they want meat, be relieved by us.* Let this therefore be always obſerved by us, that the poor have the gain of our faſting, and not our own purſes.

* *Tum grata ſunt Deo noſtra jejunia, ſi illi qui neceſſitate jejunant reficiantur à nobis.* Aug. Serm. de Temp. 64.

VI. Our Alms muſt be given *readily and ſpeedily,* without any needleſs delay; Prov. 3. 27.

delay; according to the counſel of the Wiſe-man, *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due*; that is, withhold not any act of Charity from thoſe who ſtand in need of thy help, * *Say not unto thy neighbour, go and come again, and to morrow I will give thee, when thou haſt it by thee:* he that ſo delayeth his helping-hand, is next door to him that denieth. And therefore as any occaſion offers it ſelf unto us, let us ſpeedily embrace the ſame, as knowing that a ſpeedy giver, is a double benefactor, and the ſwifter that a benefit cometh, the ſweeter it taſteth. And contrariwiſe a benefit loſeth its grace that ſticketh to his fingers who is about to beſtow it. What then ſhall we think of their charity, who put off all to their death-beds, never giving any thing conſiderable to the Poor, till they can keep it no longer? Theſe, though by their *laſt will* and teſtament, they give ſomewhat to the poor, yet queſtionleſs it is *againſt their wills*; for could they have kept it longer, they would not have parted with it.

* *Qui ſic vocatur, negandi proximus eſt,* Senec. de benefic. l. 2. c. 5. *Beneficia non ſunt procraſtinanda, ſed tempeſtive danda, ut magis prodeſſe poſſint. Bis dat, qui cito dat. Ingratum eſt beneficium quod diu inter manus dantis hæſit.* Senec. de Benef.

I ſhall deſire ſuch ſeriouſly to conſider theſe ſix things;

1. That if all Rich men ſhould do thus, the poor would ſoon be ſtarved for want of bread.

2. That this practiſe of theirs, is againſt the expreſs command of God, who requireth us to do good, and communicate out of our ſtore, while we have time and opportunity. Gal. 6. 10. Mat. 5. 16.

3. That they have no aſſurance of the continuance of their wealth, For as the Wiſe-man ſpeaketh, *Riches many times make themſelves wings, they fly away as an Eagle towards Heaven*; they have *Eagles wings* to fly from us. And how many are there, who have out-lived a fair eſtate? If God in his diſpleaſure blaſts a mans ſubſtance, it vaniſheth away in a moment. Prov. 23. 5. *Alas Aquilinas.*

4. Though their Riches ſhould continue with them, even to their deaths, yet they have no aſſurance that God will give them grace to be liberal at their deaths, who had never the goodneſs to be charitable in their life-time.

5. That they have no aſſurance that God will accept of their Death-bed charity: what St. *Auſtin* ſpeaketh of Death-bed Repentance, that *it is ſeldom true and hearty*; The ſame may I ſay of Death-bed Charity, it is ſeldom true and hearty, but for the moſt part rotten and hypocritical, proceeding from ill grounds, as vain-glory, conceit of merit, and the like.

6. That they have no aſſurance of the true performance of their Will, that the poor ſhall be the better for what is thereby given them. For how many *Executors* have proved moſt unfaithful to their truſts, whereby many charitable gifts have been clean perverted? And if friends be ſo unfaithful, to us in our life-time; how can we but queſtion their fidelity after our deaths? Oh therefore that all, whom the Lord hath bleſſed with an eſtate, would in their life-time become their own *Adminiſtrators*, making (as one ſaith) their *own hands* their *Executors*, and their *own eyes* their *Overſeers*. For queſtionleſs that charity which is exerciſed in a mans life-time is the beſt, and moſt acceptable unto God.

VII. Our

VII. Our Alms muſt be *bountiful* and *liberal*, giving out proportionably to what the Lord hath given unto us. This is implyed in that command of God to his people, *Thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto thy Brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land*; that is, thou ſhalt give unto him bountifully and liberally. And our Apoſtle here in the Text, would have rich men charged *to be rich in good works, even as God hath given them all things richly to enjoy*; *For unto whomſoever much is given, of him much ſhall be required.* And therefore the ſame Apoſtle adviſeth the *Corinthians* to *give, as God hath proſpered them*: To whom God hath given little of this worlds goods, of them he requireth but little; but to whom he hath given much, of them he requireth much. Rich men therefore muſt not only give a portion of their wealth to the relief of others, but alſo in ſome fit proportion to their eſtate. Deut. 15. 11. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Luk. 12. 48. 1 Cor. 16. 2.

Queſt. *If any ſhall ask, What is that portion or proportion of eſtate which rich men ought to ſet apart for Charitable uſes?*

Anſw. It is an hard matter to determine the quantity and proportion of mens charity, the Scripture being ſilent herein, leaving this to the diſcretion and ingenuity of the prudent Chriſtian. As the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *Every man according as he purpoſeth in his heart, ſo let him give*, &c. *A certain quantity is not ſet him, that is left to the free purpoſe of his own heart.* 2 Cor. 9. 7.

But yet though the Scripture giveth us no direct *precept* in this particular, it holdeth forth many *preſidents* for our imitation; as that of *Jacob*, who in teſtimony of his thankfulneſs unto God for what he ſhould beſtow upon him, Vowed the tenth part thereof unto God for pious and charitable uſes: *And Jacob vowed a vow unto God, ſaying, Of all that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give the tenth unto thee.* Of *Cornelius* it is recorded, that *he gave much Alms*. And the *Macedonians* are highly commended for their great bounty, and large contributions. Theſe examples are left upon record for our imitation. For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *whatſoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning, and for our admonition.* So that though the *quantity* of our Alms, how much we ſhould give, is not expreſly ſet down; yet this we find both *commanded* and *commended*, by *precepts* and *preſidents*, in the Scripture, that we give *liberally* and *bountifully* in ſome fit proportion to our eſtates; that if we be rich in this worlds goods, we ſhould then be rich in good works; *ſowing liberally, that ſo we may reap liberally.* Gen. 28. 20, 22. Acts. 10. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 3. Rom. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 11. 1 Cor. 9. 6.

Now that our Alms may be liberal, it muſt be fitted to two things, *viz.*

1. The Neceſſity of the Receiver.
2. The Ability of the Giver.

That in giving we ſhould have reſpect to the need and neceſſity of our Brother; The Law is clear which ſaith, *If there be among you a poor man of one of thy Brethren, thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto him, and ſhalt give him ſufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.* That we ſhould likewiſe have reſpect to *our own ability*: the Apoſtle St. *Peter* is as clear, where he ſaith, *If any man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth*; Deut. 15. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

giveth; that is, let every one give with reſpect to his own eſtate and ability. Notwithſtanding in caſes of urgent neceſſity, and great extremity, we are to ſtrain our ſelves even above our ability.

Here it may not be impertinent to anſwer another queſtion (for I reſolve to contrive all I have to deliver upon this ſubject, into this plain and eaſie method) and that is this.

Queſt. *How many ways may rich men exerciſe their charity?*

Anſw. 1. *By laying out a portion of their eſtate in ſuch a way as directly tends to the worſhip of God, the advancement of Religion, the ſalvation of mens ſouls*; which I may not unfitly term, *A Spiritual Charity.*

And this may alſo be done ſeveral ways. As,

1. *By contributing towards the planting and propogating the Goſpel where it hath not been.* A work ſet on foot by divers in *New-England*, but chiefly carried on by the charity of well-diſpoſed people here in *Old-England.*

2. *By ſetting up, and maintaining of Lectures*; the preaching of the Word being the ordinary means appointed by God for the bringing of
Rom. 1. 16. ſinners to the knowledg of Jeſus Chriſt, *whom to know is life eternal.*

3. *By adding to the maintenance of ſuch ſetled Preachers, whoſe pains are great, and means ſmall*, through the covetouſneſs of Impropriators, who ingroſs to themſelves what doth more properly belong to the Miniſter.

4. *By maintaining of poor Scholars at the Univerſity in reference to the work of the Miniſtry*, that ſo there may be a continual ſupply of learned, godly, and Orthodox Miniſters, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt.

5. *By beſtowing of Bibles on poor Children*, whereby through the care of
2 Tim. 3. 15. their Parents, they may be acquainted *with the knowldg of the holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wiſe unto Salvation.* Memorable is the famous gift of Sir *John Fenner*, who by his laſt Will gave ſix pounds *per annum*, to ſeveral out-Pariſhes in *London*, for the buying of Bibles, to be diſtributed among poor Children. From my own experience I can ſay, That this gift hath occaſioned many poor people to teach their Children to read, that ſo they might be capable of thoſe Bibles, which are to be given only to ſuch as can in ſome meaſure read.

6. *By erecting of Countrey-Schools*, and endowing them with ſome competent maintenance, for teaching of poor mens children, who have not wherewithall to pay for their ſchooling, which will be a ſpecial means not only to further their civil, but likewiſe their ſpiritual education. For thereby they will be made more capable of Divine inſtruction. Experience teacheth us how ineffectual the moſt powerful Miniſtry is upon an ignorant and unlearned Congregation. Queſtionleſs therefore the erecting of Countrey-Schools is a work of Charity, more noble in it ſelf, more acceptable unto God, and more beneficial to the Kingdom, than the building of Alms-houſes, who are too often filled with ſwarms of idle drones. But though this *Spiritual Charity* is queſtionleſs the more excellent, as tending to a more excellent object, namely, the ſouls of our neighbours, yet the

Docere ſimpliciter eſt melius quam paſcere, Aquin. 2a, 2æ. queſt. 32.

the bodies of our neighbours muſt be cared for as well as their ſouls: Our Charity therefore muſt alſo extend to them, and in this kind it may be practiſed and expreſſed.

II. *By a free and liberal giving the relief of thoſe who are in want*, of which I have already largely ſpoken.

III. *By a ready lending to ſuch as being in a Calling, want ſtock, or other means to help themſelves in their Trades.* This Duty of *lending*, we find expreſly *commanded both in the Law*, and *in the Goſpel*; in the Law, as in the place before quoted; *Thou ſhalt open thine hand wide to thy poor Brother, and ſhalt ſurely lend him ſufficiently for his need, in that which he wanteth*, &c. In the *Goſpel*; *Lend* (ſaith our Saviour) *looking for nothing again*; that is, lend not onely to ſuch from whom you may hope, by reaſon of their ability, to receive your own again; but alſo to ſuch, as by reaſon of their poverty may perhaps never be able to repay you. The *Pſalmiſt* maketh this a note of a *righteous and a good man*, that *he is ever merciful and lendeth*; *that ſheweth favour and lendeth.* Where we ſee it is ſet down, as the property of ſuch a man, that he is ready to lend to the poor, to ſuch as ſtand in need of his help; and that freely, without hope of gain.

Deut. 15. 7, 8.
Luke 6. 35.
Pſal. 37. 26.
Pſal. 1. 2, 5.

This duty belongeth eſpecially to Rich men, becauſe the occaſions of him that would borrow, uſually require more than meaner perſons can well ſpare; they can better give a penny than lend a pound; though in many caſes the lending our Brother a conſiderable ſum together, would be more beneficial to him, than it may be to give him half as much; there is therefore a noble and very generous act of Charity to be exerciſed this way, and it is peculiar to rich men, who have it by them wherewithall to do it.

IV. Rich men may and ought to expreſs their Charity, *by forgiving a debt, in caſe the borrower be not able to repay it.*

There be many who by the help of that which is lent them, God bleſſing their pains in the employments thereof, are able to repay what is lent. If there were not hope thereof, men would rather give than lend to ſuch.

But there are others, who notwithſtanding their care and pains in their Calling, thrive not; or by ſome accident ſuffer ſuch loſs and damage, as they are not able to repay what they have borrowed. In ſuch caſes Creditors are bound to forgive (at leaſt to forbear) their debtors. This is the intendment of that charge, *Lend, hoping for nothing again.* To take this phraſe ſimply, is to alter the nature of lending, and to turn it into giving. Herein lyeth the difference betwixt *Lending* and *Giving*: *Lending* is on condition to have again that which is lent, or at leaſt the worth of it ſome other way: *Giving* is free, without any ſuch condition. That advice of Chriſt, to *lend, hoping for nothing again*; hath reſpect to the mind of the Lender, that he ſhould not have his mind wholly and only upon the repaying of what he lendeth, but on the need of his Brother. He is not ſimply to lend, becauſe he is perſwaded he ſhall loſe nothing, but have his own again. He is to lend, becauſe he doth there-

Luk. 6. 35.

in,

in great kindneſs to his Brother, who ſtands in much need thereof.

ἀπέλπιζοντες ἐλπίζον ſperare; ἀπεπίζον deſperare.

The *Greek* word properly ſignifieth to *deſpair*, and ſo it may here be taken; as if he had ſaid, when your Brother hath need to borrow, lend, though his caſe be ſuch that you even deſpair of receiving it again, though you run ſome hazzard of loſing the principal.

If therefore it ſo fall out, that the debtor be not able to repay what he borrowed, forgive it him. He lends, hoping for nothing again; who is willing to forgive, in caſe the neceſſity of the borrower require it. This
Nehem. 5. 11. was it which *Nehemiah* enjoyned the Rich Jews. Excellently doth our Lord preſs this Duty in the parable of the two Creditors, where we have a commendable pattern of a certain King, that in ſuch a caſe forgave a great debt; and of the ſore revenge he executed on one of his ſervants,
Mat. 18. 23. becauſe he did not in like manner forgive his fellow-ſervant.

Ezek. 18. 7. & 33. 1, 5. Gen. 38. 17, 18. In the Old-Teſtament it is commended to us under the phraſe *of reſtoring the pledg*. A pledg was a pawn left by a debtor with his creditor, for aſſurance to repay the debt. Reſtoring the pledg when the debt was not paid, was an evidence of remitting the debt.

φιλοξενία compounded of φιλῶν & ξένος. *Hoſpitalitas eſt ſpecies liberalitatis qua peregrinos & hoſpites ac præſertim propter veræ Doctrinæ profeſſionem exſulantes, vera benevolentia, & aliquibus officiis hoſpitalitatis proſequimur.* Urſin. Cat. φιλοξενία ἢ φιλοτεχνία περὶ χρῆσιν ξένων. Clemens. Alexand.

V. *By Hoſpitality*, which conſiſteth not ſo much in a loving entertainment of kindred, friends, and neighbours, as of ſtrangers; as the word in the *Greek* importeth.

This is that hoſpitality, which is both commanded and commended to us in the holy Scripture. It is commanded in thoſe known Precepts of the Apoſtle St. *Paul*, Rom. 12. 13, *Be given to Hoſpitality, and be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers*, *Heb.* 13. 2. Which is as much as to ſay, *Forget not Hoſpitality*, which is an entertaining of ſtrangers. And the Apoſtle St.
1 Pet. 4. 9. *Peter* commands the faithful to whom he writes, *to uſe hoſpitality without grudging or repining*.

Gen. 13. 1, 3. It is *commended* to us in the practice of Gods people; as of *Abraham*, of whom it is recorded, that he ſate at his Tent-door looking and waiting, as it were, for ſtrangers to entertain them; and ſo ſoon as he ſaw three men, whom he took for ſuch, he ran to invite them. And of *Lot*, that as he ſate in the gate of *Sodom*, he ſaw two whom he conceived to be
Gen 19. 3. ſtrangers, *them he exceedingly preſſed to turn into his houſe, where he made them a feaſt*. And of the *Shunamite* woman, and her husband, who ſhewed
2 Kings 4 8. themſelves hoſpitable to the Prophet *Eliſha*, *as oft as he paſſed by*
Job 31. 32. *their houſe*. We have *Jobs* teſtimony of himſelf, *The ſtranger*, ſaid he, *did not lodg in the ſtreet, but I opened my door to the traveller*: Which words ſet out *Jobs* great hoſpitality, who kept open houſe for all Paſſengers. In thoſe days there was no common Inn for the entertainment of ſtrangers, and therefore they muſt have lyen out of doors, if ſome good men had not entertained them.

Having ſuch and ſo many preſidents of hoſpitality, let us ſtrive to follow them, labouring to write after their Copy, knowing aſſuredly that our

our labour of love and coſt therein ſhall not be in vain. For I may truly ſay, it is a fruitful and gainful courſe of liberality; never did any loſe by it. *Some hereby have entertained Angels*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh; *Be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers, for thereby ſome have entertained Angels unaware.* Heb. 13. 2. In ſetting down this recompence, the Apoſtle hath an eſpecial reſpect unto two inſtances, one of *Abraham*, and the other of *Lot*. Gen. 18. 2. Angels came to both theſe, in the appearance of men, whom they knew not, which ſheweth Gods high account of this Duty, in that once and again he ſent Angels to ſuch as were ready to entertain ſtrangers. Chap. 19. 1.

Yea, we may entertain Chriſt himſelf and indeed in every entertainment of a poor godly ſtranger, Chriſt himſelf: is entertained. And therefore in the great day of Judgment, we read that Chriſt puts in this good work by name; *I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in*; Jeſus Chriſt is a ſtranger in his members. Matt. 25. 35.

In ſacred Scriptures we find ſeveral others rewarded for their Hoſpitality; as,

Rebeckah for her curteſie to *Abrahams* ſervant, a meer ſtranger to her, was rewarded with precious gifts and a good Husband. The *Shunamites* Hoſpitality to the Prophet, was recompenced with giving her a Son, and reſtoring him to life. *The Widow of Sareptahs* Hoſpitality to the Prophet *Elijah*, in receiving him into her houſe in a great famine, was rewarded with preſerving and increaſing her Meal and Oyl, for it is expreſly ſaid, that *her barrel of meal waſted not, neither did her cruſe of Oyl fail, until the Lord ſent plenty of food.* Gen. 24. 22. 49. 2 Kings 4. 1 Kings 17. 16

Gaius his Hoſpitality towards St. *Paul*, in receiving him into his houſe, was recompenced with an honourable Teſtimony, which both St. *Paul* and St. *John* gave of him. Rom. 16. 23. 1 Joh. 5. 6.

Object. Some may object and ſay, Inſtead of a godly man I may happily entertain ſome diſſembling Hypocrite, and ſo loſe both my gift and reward?

Anſw. 1. Our Charity ought to hope the beſt of every one, of whom we have no evident proof, or preſumption to the contrary. 1 Cor. 13. 7.

2. If we receive a diſtreſſed Miniſter, in the Name of a Miniſter of Chriſt, or Private diſtreſſed Chriſtian, in the name of a Righteous man, ſuppoſing him to belong to Chriſt; let him be what he will, we ſhall neither loſe gift, nor reward, Chriſt hath undertaken the payment thereof.

V. Rich men may and ought in ſome caſes to expreſs their Charity, even *by ſelling what they have, for the relief of others*, according to that of our Saviour, *Sell that ye have, and give Alms.* Luk. 12. 33.

Queſt. *In what caſes muſt rich men ſell their eſtates, or any part of them for the relief of others?*

Anſw. 1. *When they are extraordinarily called thereunto:* as he that asked Chriſt, what he ſhould do to receive eternal life? Chriſt ſaid unto him, *Sell whatſoever thou haſt, and give to the poor.* That which the *Apoſtles did in leaving their Callings to follow Chriſt*, was equivolent to ſelling their poſſeſſions. Mat. 13. 17, 21. Mat. 19. 27.

2. *When they have defrauded and oppressed others,* and are rebuked for that sin, or otherwise brought to repentance for the same, they ought to testifie the truth of their repentance, by a full restitution, though it be by parting with their possession. Thus did the *Jews after their Captivity restore to their poor Brethren, whom they had oppressed with Usury, their lands and their houses,* &c. The instance of *Zacheus* tendeth also to this purpose, who promiseth to give the half of his goods to the poor.

Neh. 5. 11, 12.

Luk. 19. 8.

3. *When there are such a multitude of indigent persons in the Church, as the superfluity of such as are rich, is not sufficient to relieve them.* In this case, *Christians in the primitive* Church *that were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.*

Acts 4. 34, 35.

These particular cases, being all of them somewhat extraordinary, do not patronize the Platonical and familistical conceit of *Community of Goods.*

Which fond mistake of theirs, these arguments amongst others, may sufficiently confute, and evince propriety in lands and possessions to be lawful now in the times of the Gospel.

1. In those very times wherein Christians for use had all things common, St. *Peter* expresly saith to *Ananias,* concerning the Lands which he sold, *Whilst it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?* Hereby it is manifest, that men then had a propriety in Goods and Lands.

Acts 5. 4.

2. The duties prescribed to rich men in the words of my Text, *to do good, to be ready to distribute, and willing to communicate,* prove as much.

3. The many admonitions to pay *Debts,* to give tribute, and perform other like Duties of Justice, do imply a propriety of Goods.

4. Exhortations also to *Lend,* and to *Sell,* prove as much. For men may not lend, nor sell that wherein they have not a propriety.

Luk. 6. 35. Chap. 11. 41.

5. Inhibitions against stealing, and against all kind of injustice pre-suppose a propriety.

Ephes. 4. 28. 1 Thes. 4. 6.

Thus have I done with the seventh *property,* requisite to the right manner of giving Alms, which is bounty and liberality, whereon I have somewhat the longer insisted, because it is the principal thing intended in my Text, *That they which are rich in this worlds goods, be rich in good works.* I shall add but one more.

VIII. Our Alms must be given *prudently, with discretion,* according to every ones need. It is said of the merciful man, *A good man sheweth favour and lendeth, he will guide his affairs with discretion.* And truly there is a great deal of discretion to be used, in the ordering of our Charity, by putting a difference between poor and poor; for as one saith, *inadvised giving, is the worst kind of losing.*

Psal. 112. 5.

Turpissimum genus perdendi est inconsulta donatio.

Prudence in Alms-giving is commended to us by our Saviour, in this word, *distribute, distribute to the poor,* Luk. 18. 22. For to distribute, is

διδοῦ πτωχοῖς.

with

with diſcretion to give to ſundry perſons, ſeveral portions, according to their need. When mention is made of a prudent, diſcreet, relieving the poor, it is thus expreſſed; *Diſtribution was made unto every man according as he had need.* Acts 4. 35.

For the better performing this due diſcretion in our Charity, let theſe rules following be obſerved:

1. They are before others to be relieved, over whom we have an eſpecial charge, as they who are of our houſhold, of our own houſe and family, as Wife, Children, and Servants: For as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *If any provide not for his own, and eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel.* 1 Tim. 5. 8.

2. In our Charity we ought to have a ſpecial reſpect unto our poor kindred, for of thoſe is the fore-mentioned place (1 *Tim.* 5. 8.) to be underſtood, where the word in the *Greek*, tranſlated Houſe, is rendred *Kindred* in the Margin of your Bibles. For the ſcope of the Apoſtle is to free the Church from unneceſſary charges, and to that end doth impoſe the care of providing for poor kindred, upon ſuch of their Relations as were able. τῶν ἰδίων. 1 Tim. 5. 16.

3. They are to be relieved who are of the Congregation, or Pariſh, whereof we are members, eſpecially they who dwell near unto us, in regard that we may beſt know their wants. Deut. 15. 7, 8.

4. They whom we have juſt cauſe to believe, that they are of the houſhold of faith. For we may judg them to be true in their words; and believe their wants are ſuch as they declare them to be. Now amongſt the godly, ſuch are eſpecially to be relieved, and to be prefered in our charity, who are impriſoned, or otherwiſe ſuffer for Chriſt, and the Goſpel-ſake; For Chriſt in a ſpecial manner is relieved in the perſons of ſuch, as himſelf will acknowledg at the Day of Judgment, when he will pronounce that bleſſed ſentence of abſolution to ſuch merciful men; *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you; For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink: I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in; I was in priſon, and ye came unto me*, &c. Gal. 6. 10. Mat. 25. 34.

5. They whom we diſcern to ſtand in need of preſent ſuccour, though they be meer ſtrangers, whom we never ſaw or knew before. Hereof we have a worthy pattern ſet before us in the good *Samaritan.* Luk. 10. 33, &c.

6. They who are in Priſon, or ſick, or any other ways reſtrained from making their wants known unto others. Mat. 25. 36

7. They of whoſe piety, poverty, and neceſſity, credible teſtimony is brought unto us, though we ſee them not our ſelves. Thus many of the Chriſtian *Gentiles*, ſent relief to the Churches at *Jeruſalem*, upon the Apoſtles making known their wants. Rom. 15. 25, 26. Act. 24. 17.

In theſe and other like caſes we ought to extend our Charity according to the neceſſity of thoſe whom we relieve, and our own ability. And not think it enough to give a few ſcraps of bread and meat, or ſome half-pennies or pence, to common beggars at our doors, or in the ſtreets. This kind

of Alms savoureth more of vain outward ostentation, than of true inward compassion: And it more beseems proud *Pharisees*, than humble Christians. A charitable Christian ordinarily giveth more to one whose distressed case he knows, or is credibly made known unto him, than these *Pharisees* do to many beggars at many times.

Quest. *But you'l say, do ye then utterly condemn all giving to common beggars, as unlawful?*

Answ. For answer to this Question, we must distinguish of common beggars; some are strong and lusty, able to work, and yet are so lazy, that they will not work, but would live by the sweat of other mens brows. Others again are weak and impotent, unable to work through age, sickness, lameness, blindness, or the like.

These latter are fit objects of charity, and therefore ought to be relieved. But the former sort of Beggars, namely, the strong and lusty, who are able to work, but will not through laziness, are no fit objects of charity; and therefore it is no work of charity to relieve such: For,

1. Their trade of life is no warrantable calling. It is a *disorderly walking*, which is expresly taxed by the Apostle; for saith he, *When we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all.* It cannot be said of those, *As the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk*; or, *let every man abide in the same Calling wherein he was called.* God hath called none to such a trade.

2 Thes. 3. 10, 11.

1 Cor. 7. 17, 20.

2. They are as drones in a hive of Bees; they live of the labours of others, but bring in nothing to the stock, as all the other Bees do. They are as barren Trees, which receive sap from the earth, but yield no fruit; unprofitable burthens of the earth, whose sad doom ye may read, *Luke* 13. 7.

Telluris inutile pondus.

3. Many of them are of no particular Church, nor of any civil society, but out of all Government in Church and State. In this and the former respect, they may justly be stiled *Children of Belial*, without yoak.

Deut. 13. 13.

4. They withhold, and in a manner rob the state wherein they dwell, of their labour and pains. The State or Kingdom is as a body, all that dwell therein are as so many members; now nature teacheth every member to do somewhat for the benefit of the whole. These doing nothing thereto, sin against the light of Nature.

Qui largiuntur indignis ea quæ dignis conferri debebant, tria committunt absurda.

5. They who are truly poor, shall by this means be neglected and scanted, whilst these lazy drones devour that which of right belongeth unto them.

1. Nam & ipsi jacturam faciunt.

6. They are a great scandal and shame to the Government of the Nation wherein they are. For their course of life implieth that no good provision is made for the poor, nor order taken to set such as are able to work, and to relieve such as are impotent. Now it is a great sin to be a shame to ones own Countrey.

7. Their

7. Their kind of life is ſenſual and bruitiſh; for as brutes they ſpend all their days in ſeeking food for their bodies.

2. *Et in bonos contumelioſi ſunt.*

From hence it followeth, that they who relieve ſuch, make themſelves acceſſary to the fore-mentioned ſins.

3. *Et malos roborant materia vitiorum ſuppeditа.*

There are ſome allegations made for relieving ſuch; but they are undue allegations, and may eaſily be anſwered; The chiefeſt of them is this:

1. Chriſt commandeth to *give to every man that asketh thee.* Luke 6. 30.

Anſw. To this I anſwer, that the Precept is to be taken in reference to a falſe poſition of the *Phariſees*, which was this, that their Countrey-men and friends only were their Neighbours, whom by the Law they were bound to love. That this was their opinion, is evident by this their gloſs on the Law; *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.* Mat. 5. 43. And by the Parable which Chriſt produceth to demonſtrate to the Lawyer who was his Neighbour. In oppoſition to that falſe doctrine, Chriſt commands to *give*, not to friends only, but *to every man.* So as the ſcope of Luke 10. 29, that precept is, to take away reſpect of perſons in Alms-giving: that we 30, &c. ſhould not reſtrain this Duty of Charity to Countrey-men, kindred, and friends; but extend it alſo to ſtrangers, enemies, and to every one, that being in need crave it of us.

2. A ſecond allegation is, *That many beggars may periſh if they be not relieved.*

Anſw. In caſe of neceſſity they may and muſt be relieved, either at doors, in ſtreets, or other like places, where their neceſſity is manifeſted. Neceſſity (as we ſpeak) hath no Law. It diſpenſes with ordinary Rules. Inſtance that which Chriſt produced concerning *David. He entred into the Houſe of God, and did eat the ſhew-bread which was not lawful.* Mat. 12. 4.

I have done with the *Queſtion* allotted to me, give me leave to add a few words for the more profitable preſſing this moſt neceſſary, but much neglected Duty of Charity; I ſhall diſpatch my intendment herein.

1. By ſhewing you by what means you may obtain this Grace.

2. Give you ſome Motives to quicken you up to a conſcionable performance of the works of it.

The means are theſe,

1. *Meditation:* Seriouſly meditate,

1. Of the *Neceſſity* of it, which ariſeth from the Lords expreſs charge and command, unto which we are bound to yield obedience. It is often commanded both in the Old and New Teſtament. That I may not be tedious, I ſhall give you but two or three proofs, *Deut.* 15, 11. A place I often mentioned for the excellency, and exceeding pertinency of it to this purpoſe. Saith the Lord to his people there; *The poor ſhall never ceaſe out of the Land; Therefore I command thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in the Land*; that is, thou ſhalt give unto him freely and bountifully. And ſaith our Saviour in the New-Teſtament; *Give to him that asketh* Luke 5. 42.

thee,

thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. And
Heb. 13. 16. ſaith the Apoſtle, *To do good, and to communicate, forget not, for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed*; in which words he preſſeth the Duty with a forcible Motive; for who would not do that which is well-pleaſing unto God, who is bountiful in rewarding the leaſt good we do upon his command?

This duty of Alms-giving being ſo expreſly commanded in Scripture, it is not in our power to omit or neglect the ſame; neither can any creature give us a diſpenſation againſt the Creators command. A Prophet ſtileth omiſſion of that which God enjoyneth to be done (yea though that omiſſion were but in part, and that upon a fair pretence) *Rebellion, which is as the ſin of witchcraft: and ſtubbornneſs,*
1 Sam. 15. 23. *which is as iniquity and idolatry.* Againſt him who failed in performing the charge enjoyned him (though he were a King) this doom is denounced, *becauſe thou haſt rejected the word of the Lord, he hath alſo*
Verſ. 26. *rejected thee from being King.* In like manner may God reject ſuch as neglect this Duty of *Charity*, when he calls them to it, from being Kings, and reigning in Heaven. We have a manifeſt inſtance thereof, *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43.

Now the giving of Alms being a Duty ſo expreſly commanded in the holy Scriptures, it cannot therefore be accounted a matter meerly arbitrary, left to a mans own will, to give or not to give. But it is a bounden duty, which they that in any competent meaſure can do, muſt not omit; which conſideration cannot but be a ſtrong incitation unto us, to make conſcience of this Duty of Alms-giving, as occaſion is offered, and not to over-ſlip opportunities, that by the Divine providence are offered unto us. Should we neglect that which our Lord hath expreſly commanded? that whereunto by virtue of that command we are bound? that whereof we are to give an account? Let us upon the Lords commands do what in this kind we can: And when we have done
Luk. 17. 10. what we can, ſay, *We are unprofitable ſervants, we have done what was our duty to do.*

2. Of the *Equity* of this Duty of Alms-giving. It is a moſt equal thing, that he who hath wherewithal, ſhould give to him that hath not. The equity ariſeth both from the Divine providence, and alſo from the inſtability of mans ſtate and condition.

1. God for this end gives more to ſome than to others, that they who have more abundance, ſhould give out of their abundance to them who are in want. This was typically ſignified by the gathering of *Manna*, which though it were rained down from Heaven, yet the Lord would not allow, that they who had gathered much, even more than was needful for themſelves, and their houſhold, ſhould hoard up their ſuperfluity, but enjoyned them to communicate of their abundance to ſuch as had not enough. The which the Apoſtle applieth to the giving
2 Cor. 8. 14. of Alms out of our abundance to thoſe who want; which he ſtileth *equality*.

2. Mans ſtate is ſo variable, as he who now hath, may quickly want; and

and in want deſire to be ſuccoured by ſuch as have. It is thereupon moſt equal, that they who would be ſuccoured in their need, ſhould be willing to ſuccour the need of others. This equity doth Chriſt himſelf preſs; *all things whatſoever ye would that men ſhould do to you, do ye even ſo to them.* As a ground to enforce this the further, he addeth, *for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Hereby implying, that this doctrine is contained in the Law and the Prophets; but that is not all, theſe words, *this is the Law and the Prophets*, intend that the ſum of the Law and the Prophets conſiſteth therein; and the main ſcope of them tendeth thereunto; namely, ſo far as they contain the duties of man to man. So evident is the equity hereof even by the light of nature, as the very heathen who wanted the light of Gods word diſcerned it. Well therefore might the Apoſtle enforce this duty of charity upon this ground, thus, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them*, that is, be helpful to others which cannot help themſelves, as you would have others afford ſuccour unto you, if you were ſuccourleſs. Matt. 7. 12. Heb. 13. 3.

3. *Meditate of the manifold ſingular benefits which do follow and accompany a conſcionable performance of this duty*; For thereby we diſcharge our duty to God, who requireth it at our hands, and as a conſequent thereof we ſhall glorifie God; for it tends much to his praiſe and glory, when in ſuch works as himſelf hath commanded, his children teſtifie their obedience and thankfulneſs; and therefore ſaith our Saviour, *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit.* Joh. 15. 8.

And by our Charity, as we ſhall grace and adorn our holy profeſſion, ſo we ſhall ſtop the mouths of wicked men from ſpeaking any evil of us or of our profeſſion; for how are men apt to ſpeak of us, and of our profeſſion, according to the fruits we bring forth, and the good works which we do?

And as we ſhall thereby comfort, and make glad the hearts of the poor and diſtreſſed; ſo we ſhall refreſh our own ſouls, in that our works of Charity will evidence our fruit to be ſound and ſaving, lively and effectual; for as *Rachel* ſaid to *Jacob, Give me Children or elſe I die*; in like manner ſaith faith to the ſoul of a Chriſtian, *Give me Children*, let me bring forth good works, *elſe I die*, and have no life in me, according to that of the Apoſtle *James, Faith without works is dead*, its not a living but a dead faith, that manifeſts not its life by working. Jam. 2. 26.

II. As Meditation, ſo *Prayer* is a ſpecial means on our part to be performed, for attaining unto this grace of Charity. I ſay, earneſt and fervent prayer unto God for the ſame; for as he is the fountain and author of every good gift, ſo he hath ſanctified Prayer as the means of obtaining every good gift from him.

Be earneſt therefore with God in Prayer, that he would be pleaſed to give thee a compaſſionate heart towards the needs and neceſſities of the poor members of Jeſus Chriſt; ſo an open hand, that thou mayeſt freely and liberally contribute unto them, according to their neceſſity, and thy ability: Beg of God, that as he hath bleſſed thee with ſome competent eſtate, ſo he would add this mercy, to give thee an heart to

give

give out proportionably to what he hath given thee; and that in teſtimony of thy love, and thankfulneſs unto him. But alas how few are there who in their prayers unto God are mindful of this grace of Charity? how few are there who ever begged of God, that he would be pleaſed to implant this noble grace of Charity in their hearts? If upon examination thou findeſt thy ſelf to have been faulty therein, go take up a new reſolution to be earneſt with God in prayer for this grace eſpecially, and never to give over till thou find it in ſome meaſure wrought in thy ſoul, till thou find thy ſelf upon all good occaſions ready to diſtribute, and willing to communicate to the needs and neceſſities of thy poor Brethren.

III. *Diligence in our Callings*, is another means on our part to be performed, for the practiſing of charity. He that would be charitable to the poor in their needs and neceſſities, muſt be diligent and induſtrious in his calling, ſo that he may have wherewithall to expreſs his charity; for mens diligence in their callings is uſually crowned with a bleſſing, according to that of the wiſe man, *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*: And again, *The ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat*, that is, ſhall be inriched with outward bleſſings: and the Greeks ſay, *That plentifulneſs follows painfulneſs*, and *that all things are made Servants to care and induſtry?* And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* preſcribeth diligence and induſtry in a lawful calling as a means of charity; *Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his own hands the thing whith is good, that he may have to give to him that needs.* This is one end we ſhould propound to our ſelves, in the works of our callings, namely, that through Gods bleſſing on our pains and endeavours, we may have, not only ſufficient for our own livelihood, and of them that belong unto us, but alſo ſomewhat for the relief of others; *Solomon* deſcribing the vertuous woman, ſaith in the firſt place, *that ſhe ſeeks wool and flax, and works willingly with her hands*; And then, *that ſhe ſtretches out her hands to the Poor, yea, ſhe ſtretcheth forth her hands to the needy.*

Prov. 10. 4. Chap. 13. 4. Πόνω πλοῦτος ὀπηδεῖ τῆς ἐπιμελείας πᾶλα πάντα γίνεται *Stob.* Eph. 4. 28. Prov. 31. 13.

IV. *Be careful to prevent all ſuperfluities in your expences.* As diligence in your Callings, ſo frugality in your ſpending, is a ſpecial means for the practiſe of Charity; *Frugality*, ſaith *Juſtin*, *Is the mother of vertue*; I am ſure it is the foundation and ſupporter of *Charity*; For let a mans eſtate be never ſo great, yet if there be not frugality uſed in the management thereof, there will be but little found for works of charity. And on the other ſide, though a mans eſtate be but mean and low in the world, yet if there be frugality uſed in the management of it, there will be ever ſomewhat for charitable uſes. As therefore thou deſireſt to be charitable, be careful to prevent all unneceſſary expences; I mean, let not thy apparel be too coſtly; for how can it be expected, that they ſhould be charitable, ready to diſtribute to the neceſſities of others, who lay out the greateſt part of their eſtates upon their backs. Neither let thy feaſtings be too frequent, nor too chargeable; which is noted for one of the ſins of the old World, who *were given to eating*, as the word in

Genetrix virtutum frugalitas, Juſt. l. 90. τρώγοντες. Matt. 24. 38.

in the Original properly ſignifieth. Neither let thy Recreations be too expenſive, in playing more for money than for refreſhment. Oh that ſuch of you who ſpend ſo much time and money on your Recreations, as if God had ſent you into the world, and given you the good things of the world, for no other end than to follow your pleaſures, would conſider what a fearful reckoning you are to make at the day of Judgment, not only of your precious time laviſhly miſpent, but alſo of your eſtate wickedly loſt, or waſted; when in thy account there ſhall be found ſo much waſted in gaming and pleaſures, and ſo little given to the poor.

V. *Set apart ſomething out of thine incomes and receipts, as a ſacred ſtock for charitable uſes.* For,

1. Hereby thou wilt be fitted and prepared with matter for ſuch uſes, having always ſomewhat by thee to give upon any good occaſion.

2. By this means thou wilt more readily and willingly, more freely and liberally contribute to the needs and neceſſities of others, having a ſtock by thee for that very end and purpoſe. All men naturally are hard-hearted, and cloſe-handed, and thereupon are very hardly perſwaded to part with any thing conſiderable for charitable uſes. But this conſecrating before-hand a part of thine eſtate for the uſe of the poor, will cauſe thy charity to flow out more freely and bountifully.

Ad opes honoreſque expetendos, ad cumulandas divitias, furioſa eſt noſtra libido, inſinit. cupiditas. Calv. Inſt. l. 3. c. 7.

Now a ſacred ſtock for the Poor may be raiſed two ways?

1. *By ſetting apart ſomething every Lords day, out of thy comings in the week before, according as God hath proſpered thee*; which practice we find preſcribed unto us by the direction of the Holy Ghoſt, and warranted unto us by the Apoſtolical authority; for ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, *Now concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of* Galatia, *even ſo do ye. Upon the firſt day of the week* (which is the Lords Day) *let every one of you lay by him in ſtore, as God hath proſpered him*; that is, according to the ability wherewith God hath bleſſed him, let him ſet apart ſomething for the relief of the poor, eſpecially the poor Saints. 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2.

This rule I would commend to ſuch who live upon their daily labour. But for thoſe *Merchants*, *Citizens*, and *Trades-men*, who ſell much of their wares upon truſt, and know not certainly at the weeks end what they have gained; I would adviſe ſuch, when they have caſt up their accounts at the years end, to ſet apart ſomething of their *comings in that year, according as God hath proſpered them, for charitable uſes,* as they expect Gods bleſſing upon their trading the year following.

2. *By conſecrating unto God a certain portion of thy yearly incomes and revenues for charitable uſes.* What this portion ſhould be, I dare not determine, the Scriptures being ſilent therein; only in the general we are commanded *to give out proportionably to what God hath given unto us, that they who are rich in this worlds goods, be rich in good works.* But this I can ſay, that the moſt that I have heard or read of, who have

taken this courſe to conſecrate unto God a certain portion of their eſtate to charitable uſes, have followed the example of *Jacab*, in giving a tenth part unto God. And as God did exceedingly bleſs *Jacob* after his vow, ſo likewiſe hath he bleſſed divers others after their vow unto God.

Gen. 28. 22.

Mr. *Tho. Gataker*, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of Mr. *Jo. Parker*, Merchant and Citizen of *London*.

An eminent Divine of this City, now with God, in his Funeral Sermon at the Burial of a Merchant, ſpeaking of his *Charity*, ſaith, that at his firſt effectual call, among other things he then reſolved upon, this was one, *to ſet apart every year a tenth of his gain for the relief of the poor*; and that God from that time forward abundantly advanced his eſtate.

Another eminent Divine in his Funeral-Sermon at the Burial of the Lord *Harrington*, ſpeaking of his *Charity*, declared, that in his life-time he gave the tenth part of his yearly revenue to the poor.

Mr. *Stock.*

And from mine own experience, I can tell you of one yet living, who finding little coming in by his trade, reſolved upon two things.

1. *To be more careful in Sanctifying the Lords Day.*

2. *To ſet apart the tenth of his increaſe for charitable uſes.* Whereupon he gained ſo much in a few years, that he gave over his Calling, and ever ſince liveth upon his Rents.

Many like inſtances I could give you of ſome that are Dead, and others yet living, who have devoted, ſome a tenth, and others a fifth part of their whole eſtate to pious and charitable uſes. Which I do not propound as a General Rule to all good Chriſtians; for, ſome there are who have no more than is neceſſary for the comfortable ſupport of themſelves and families, from whom leſs is required for the relief of others. But I queſtion whether ſuch, whom the Lord hath bleſſed with a plentiful eſtate, ſo that their neceſſary expences are, or might be, far leſs than their incomes, can be accounted *rich in good works*, unleſs they give at leaſt a *tenth part* of their whole yearly income to charitable uſes. I ſay of their *whole* yearly income, *without firſt deducting* any part thereof for diet, cloaths, or other neceſſary expences; for the tenth of the remainder will be a very inconſiderable proportion for a rich man to devote to charity, and far ſhort of that which the Scripture ſeems to call for. It is recorded of the *Jews*, that very many amongſt the richer ſort, who are devout in their Religion, do uſually give away a tenth part of their eſtate to charitable uſes. And is it not very unbeſeeming *Chriſtians*, who are rich in this worlds Goods, to fall ſhort of the *Jews* herein?

Having thus done with the means on our part to be performed for attaining unto this Grace of Charity.

Come we now to the Motives, to quicken us up to a conſcionable performance of the works of it. I ſhall touch only upon theſe Four:

1. The Excellency of the Duty.
2. The Piety which it containeth in it.
3. The Profit which ariſeth from it.
4. The Damage which follows upon the neglect thereof.

1. The

I. The firſt Motive or Inducement to Charity, may be taken from *the excellency thereof.* I ſuppoſe that all will grant that the greateſt excellency that a creature can attain unto, is to be like his Creator. That excellency wherein man was at firſt created, is thus ſet out, *God created man in his own Image*, that is, *in his own likeneſs.* And that excellency wherewith we ſhall be glorified in Heaven, is ſet out by our likeneſs to Chriſt; for it is ſaid, *Our bodies ſhall then be faſhioned like unto his glorious body*; yea, in the whole man, *when he ſhall appear, then we ſhall be like him.* Gen. 1. 26, 27. Phil. 1. 21. 1 Joh. 3. 2.

Now while we live on earth, there is nothing wherein we can ſhew our ſelves more like unto God, than in ſhewing mercy, and in ſuccouring ſuch as ſtand in need. When God ſets himſelf to proclaim his Name, he moſt inſiſteth upon his *mercifulneſs and goodneſs.* Chriſt himſelf doth preſs this Motive to enforce this Duty, thus, [*Be ye merciful, as your father is merciful*]. The excellency of Charity doth herein further appear, that Chriſt hath ſet the poor in his own room; inſomuch as they who relieve the poor, do therein relieve Chriſt himſelf. So much doth Chriſt acknowledg, where he ſaith to ſuch as ſuccoured the poor, *Inaſmuch as you have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done it unto me:* Is it not an excellent thing to relieve Chriſt? They then that relieve the poor, do an excellent work. As it is a great aggravation of perſecuting the true profeſſors of the Faith, becauſe therein they perſecute Chriſt himſelf, as is implyed under this Divine voice that affrighted *Saul*, while he was breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* So it is a great commendation of true Charity, that Chriſt himſelf is relieved thereby. Exod. 34. 6. Luk. 6. 36. Matt. 25. 40. Acts 9. 1, 4.

II. Another Motive is the *Piety*, which in and by performing this duty of Alms-giving is manifeſted. Piety, I ſay to God. For *pure Religion and undefiled before God, is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs and Widows in their affliction.* Here he puts two particulars for all kinds of Charity: And by this phraſe, *Pure Religion before God is this*, he intends four things. Jam. 1. 28.

1. That it is but a meer ſhew of Religion that is without charity.
2. That true Religion will make men charitable.
3. That Charity will prove men to be truly Religious.
4. That works of Charity are as acceptable to God, as Duties of Religion. For God accounts Charity *an odour of a ſweet ſmell, a Sacrifice acceptable, and well-pleaſing unto him.* The poor and needy are to God as the Altars of burnt-offerings, and incenſe were under the Law. Thoſe things which were laid on them, and offered up, were given to the Lord, and as a gift accepted by him. Even ſo are Alms given to the poor, and the poor are the Altar, Alms the Sacrifice. Now who would not diſpoſe of that which he hath, as God may account it given to him, and anſwerably accept it? On this very ground doth the Apoſtle incite the *Hebrews* to this duty, in this manner, *To do good, and to communicate forget not; for with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.* Phil. 4. 11. Heb. 13. 16.

Thus we ſee how works of Charity are not only uſeful and profitable to man, but alſo acceptable and well-pleaſing to God, which conſideration addeth much life to the Duty here preſſed.

Omnes experimus utilitatem, ad eamque rapimur nec facere aliter ullo modo poſſumus, Cic. Offic. 3.

III. A third Motive is, *the manifold profit wherewith it is rewarded.* Profit and advantage is the Motive, which, for the moſt part, ſpurs men on to labour and take pains, to riſe early, and ſit up late, to venture goods, life, and all they have. Witneſs the pains, travels, and watchings, and adventures of Labourers, Work-men, Trades-men, Farmers, Merchants, Mariners, *&c.* yet that profit which they aim at, is but earthly and temporary, and their hope of attaining it uncertain. Surely works of Charity give an aſſured hope of a far greater and better profit than earth can afford.

Facundus eſt ager pauperum citò reddit donantibus fructum, Aug. Serm. de Divite.

Matt. 10. 42.

In general it is promiſed, *That if we caſt our bread upon the waters, we ſhall find it after many days*; that is, if we give Alms to the poor, where all we do may ſeem to be caſt away, as if it were thrown into the Sea; yet in due time will it return to us with advantage. And leſt any ſhould be diſcouraged from doing works of Charity, our Saviour aſſureth us, *That whoſoever giveth but a cup of cold water* (which is one of the leaſt acts of Charity we can perform) *ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward*

Rom. 3. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 8.

If in ſpecial it be demanded what profit is there of Charity? I anſwer, (as the Apoſtle did of Circumciſion) *much every way.* Yea, I may ſay of *Charity*, as the Apoſtle doth of *Piety*, *It is profitable unto all things, having the promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

In this life is promiſed,

Prov. 28. 17.

1. Sufficiency, *He that giveth to the poor ſhall not lack*; that is, he ſhall be ſecured from want and penury; God will not ſuffer him to be brought to penury, who hath been charitable to the poor.

Prov. 3. 9, 10.

2. Not only ſufficiency, but likewiſe *abundance*; For ſaith the Wiſeman, *Honour the Lord with thy Subſtance*, by giving freely and chearfully to charitable and pious uſes; *So ſhall thy Barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new-wine*, which is an hyperbolical expreſſion, implying plenty and abundance.

Deut. 15. 10.

3. *Good ſucceſs in what he enterpriſeth.* According to that of *Moſes' Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, becauſe that for this thing the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto.*

Pſal. 41. 1.

4. *Deliverance out of trouble.* For ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor*; *the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

Verſ. 2.

5. *Protection againſt enemies*; As it followeth in the next verſe, *Thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.*

Verſ. 3.

6 *Succour in ſickneſs*; as the Prophet goes on, *The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing*; that is, the Lord will comfort and ſupport him in his ſickneſs, and at length reſtore his ſtrength again. *Thou wilt make all his bed in his ſickneſs*; that is, thou wilt give him eaſe and reſt, as they do to ſick men that make their beds.

7. To

7. To paſs by other particulars, *Bleſſedneſs*, which comprizeth under it all manner of Commodities, is promiſed to the Charitable perſon, *Prov.* 22. 9. And in *Pſal.* 41. 2. It is ſaid, *He ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth*; yea, *and at the reſurrection of the juſt*, Luk. 14. 14.

8. This promiſe is extended to his poſterity; *for his ſeed ſhall be bleſſed.* Pſal. 37. 26.

Theſe and other like promiſes of temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal bleſſings, being made by the Lord God of Truth, may with much confidence be reſted upon. For Gods Words are Deeds, his Promiſes Performances.

In the life to come, merciful men ſhall *inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.* Mat. 25. 34.

There are among others, two Metaphors often uſed by the Holy Ghoſt, in ſetting out Alms-giving, which do much amplifie the commodity thence ariſing.

One is taken from *lending*; the other from *ſowing*.

1. Alms-giving is ſet forth in Scripture by *lending*; yea, to ſuch a lending, whereby we have not only the principal reſtored, but with great encreaſe. And whereas ſuch as put forth their money unto men, can expect but ſix in the hundred: If we in obedience to the command of God, ſhall freely part with our money to the uſe of the poor for their relief; we ſhall receive an hundred for ſix, yea, an hundred for one, and eternal life to boot. Mat. 10. 30. And we need not to doubt of the payment; for though the poor be never ſo unable, yet we have an all-ſufficient *Surety*, even God himſelf, who hath undertaken to pay whatſoever is thus put forth, according to that of the Wiſe-man, *He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.* Prov. 19. 17. Where you have Gods counterbond to ſave you harmleſs, in which he both acknowledgeth the debt, and promiſeth payment. And what better ſecurity can any man deſire, than a bond under Gods own hand? The conſideration whereof ſhould methinks make us willing to embrace any opportunity of putting out our money to this great advantage.

2. As for the other Metaphor of *ſowing*, it is in Scripture applied to Alms-giving under this phraſe, *He hath diſperſed.* As the Husbandman diſperſeth his ſeed which he ſoweth in the earth; ſo doth the Alms-giver his Alms; therefore this is added by way of expoſition, *He hath given to the poor.* Pſal. 112. 9. The Apoſtle alſo applieth unto Alms-giving this proverbial ſpeech, *He which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly; and he which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully.* 2 Cor. 9. 6. Now what is it that ordinarily bringeth forth a greater increaſe, than ſowing ſeed in fertile Ground? It is ſaid of *Iſaac*, that he *ſowed in the Land, and received in the ſame year an hundred-fold.* Gen. 26. 12. And Chriſt ſaith, that *good ground beareth fruit, ſome an hundred-fold, ſome ſixty-fold, ſome thirty-fold.* Mat. 13. 8. Now Alms-giving is one of thoſe things that ſhall receive an hundred-fold, and ſhall inherit everlaſting life.

If therefore profit and advantage may be a Motive to ſtir us up un-

unto any thing, ſurely it ſhould be a motive to incite us unto liberality in Alms-giving, to be bountiful in contributing to the relief of the poor.

For it is a moſt certain truth, that *giving to the poor, is the ſureſt and ſafeſt way of getting.* For though Husbandmen may ſometimes loſe the benefit of their ſeed ſown, through mill-dews, or unſeaſonable weather; and ſuch as put their money to Uſe, may come ſhort of their principal: yet he who with an honeſt and ſincere heart giveth to the poor, ſhall in no wiſe loſe his reward. For as the Wiſe-man ſpeaketh, *There is that ſcattereth, and yet encreaſeth,* Prov. 11. 24, intimating unto us, that this ſcattering is the beſt way of encreaſing. And indeed ſo it
Luke 6. 35. is; for hath not our Saviour promiſed, *That if we give, it ſhall be given unto us, good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together?* Here God gives us as it were a bill of his hand, and enters into bond, and becomes Surety with the poor, that what we give ſhall be repayed with advantage. This is a *Paradox* to worldly men, that *giving ſhould be the ſureſt and ſafeſt way of getting and encreaſing,* yet nothing more clearly laid down in the Scripture, and found to be true by the experience of Gods People.

4. The fourth Motive and Inducement is *the damage which may enſue upon the neglect of Alms-giving.* Though it argue a kind of ſervile diſpoſition to be moved with fear of loſs or gain, to a duty; yet of that diſpoſition are many; and in that reſpect this may be added as an Inducement to the Duty.

The damage that may ariſe upon the neglect of Charity, when it ought to be ſhewed, is in the kind thereof as large, as the fore-mentioned benefits of performing the duty, in the kind of it.

For the neglect of the Duty doth not only cauſe a forfeiture of all the fore-mentioned benefits ariſing from the performance thereof, but alſo pulleth upon the neglectors head, many evils. Where the Wiſe-man ſaith,
Prov. 11. 17. *The merciful man doth good to his own ſoul*; he addeth, *but he that is cruel, troubleth his own fleſh. Soul and Fleſh* are the two eſſential parts of a man; both the one and the other are Synechdochically put for the whole man, even for the perſon. By a cruel man, is meant an unmerciful, or hard-hearted man; for he is oppoſed to a merciful man. The meaning then of this Proverb is this; As a merciful man doth good, not only to his poor brother to whom he ſheweth mercy, but alſo to himſelf: So an hard-hearted man doth not only grieve his diſtreſſed neighbour in affording him no ſuccour, but alſo brings much damage to himſelf. *For*
Verſ. 24. *he that withholdeth more than is meet, cometh to poverty.* With-holding is there oppoſed to ſcattering, which word hath reference to caſting or ſowing ſeed on the earth to bring forth a crop; and thereby is meant Alms-giving. On the contrary, *With-holding more than is meet,* implies a denial of Alms, when there is juſt cauſe to give. Juſtice and Equity require this Duty (as we have before ſhewed) ſo as that phraſe doth much aggravate this kind of unmercifulneſs: and as a juſt puniſhment thereof, that which covetous men by refuſing to give, ſeek to prevent, ſhall fall upon them, even *poverty.*

And

And if in any diſtreſs they ſhall be forced to ſeek help of others, even they ſhall be neglected as they neglected others. The Wiſe-man teſtifieth as much in theſe words, *Who ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he ſhall alſo cry himſelf, and not be heard.* Not only other men, but alſo God himſelf will refuſe to hear his cry. *Dives*, who refuſed to relieve *Lazarus*, could not obtain any to afford him a drop of water to cool his tongue, when he was tormented in Hell flames. It is expreſly ſaid, that *he ſhall have judgment without mercy, that hath ſhewed no mercy*, James 2. 13. For God deals with men according to their dealing with others. Prov. 21. 13. Luke 16. 24. Matt. 18. 33.

Finally, as bleſſings are promiſed to merciful men, ſo curſes are denounced againſt unmerciful men. As under bleſſings, all manner of good things are comprized, ſo under curſes, all manner of evils. Unmerciful men ſhall have the curſes of men, and *people ſhall curſe them.* And at the great Day of Judgment, they ſhall be pronounced curſed by the Great Judg. *For then ſhall he ſay unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. Prov. 28. 27. Prov. 11. 26. Matt. 25. 41, 42, &c.

Having thus done with the *Motives*, I ſhall cloſe this diſcourſe with anſwering ſome *Objections*, which keep back many from a conſcionable diſcharge of this Duty.

Object. 1. Some object their great charge, having a wife and many children to provide for; and are ready to ſay with the Apoſtle, That *Parents ought to lay up for their Children. And if any provide not for his own, eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, he hath denied the faith, and is worſe than an Infidel*; How then can we be liberal to the poor? 2 Cor. 12. 14. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Anſw. I deny not but Parents ought to provide for their Children, ſo far as they may with a good conſcience. But know, that the ſame Apoſtle who commands you to *lay up* for your Children, doth likewiſe command you to *lay out* a conſiderable part of your eſtate for the ſuccour and relief of others. As *Gal.* 6. 10, *As we have opportunity let us do good unto all, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith.* And *Heb.* 13. 16, *But to do good, and to communicate forget not; for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed.* If therefore you would approve your ſelves ſincere Chriſtians, you muſt bear an equal and impartial reſpect to all and every the commands of the Lord, making conſcience of one Duty as well as of another.

2. The greater thy love, the ſtronger thine affections are to thy Children, the more liberal and bountiful ſhouldſt thou be to the poor Saints and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, that thereby thou mayeſt entail Gods bleſſing upon the perſons and eſtate of thy Children. I am ſure thou wilt grant that without Gods bleſſing, all thou ſhalt bequeath unto thy children will little avail them; and what better courſe canſt thou take to procure Gods bleſſing upon that part of thy eſtate which thou ſhalt leave them, than freely to communicate ſome part thereof to pious and charitable uſes? For as the Pſalmiſt expreſſeth it, *The*

ſeed

Pſal. 37. 26. *ſeed of the merciful ſhall be bleſſed.* Whereby is implied, that thy mercy and liberality to the poor, will entail Gods bleſſing upon thy children.

Very ſolicitous many are to entail their Lands and Houſes on their Poſterity, that they may continue in the ſame family: But I know no ſurer way, than in their life-time to communicate a conſiderable part of their eſtate to the poor. And thus by taking ſomewhat from your Childrens Portion for the relief of the poor, you may exceedingly advance their eſtate. Hath God bleſſed thee with Children? in Chriſtian-diſcretion then thou ſhouldſt be charitable, that thereby thou mayeſt procure Gods bleſſing, both on thy ſelf and poſterity. For thy ſparing and withholding from the poor, to make thy Children rich, may prove the ſubverſion and ruine of thine Houſe and Children.

Forſitan hæredi præſtabis quicquid miſericordiæ cauſa de ejus portione detraxeris, Aug. de tempore Serm. 76.

3. Though thou oughteſt to lay up ſome competent portions for thy children, yet ought not that to be a pretence againſt laying out a portion of thine eſtate here on the poor. For know, that the poor have a right unto part of thine eſtate, as well as thy children, though not unto ſo great a part. In which reſpect the Spirit of God calleth that part of the rich mans ſtock which he can well ſpare, *the poor mans due,* unto whom of right it doth belong; for ſaith he, *Prov.* 3. 27, *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* Whereupon ſaid an ancient Father, *It is the bread of the hungry which moulders in thy Cupboard; It's the garment of the naked which hangs uſeleſs in thy Chamber: It's the gold of the poor which lieth ruſting in thy Cheſt.* So that thy relieving the poor, is not only an act of mercy, left to thy choice to do, or not to do; but alſo of juſtice, to the performance whereof thou ſtandeſt bound. And therefore what St. *Paul* ſaith of himſelf concerning the preaching of the Goſpel; *Neceſſity is laid upon me, yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the Goſpel.* The like ſhould all Rich men eſpecially ſay of themſelves, *neceſſity is laid upon us to give out a part of our eſtate for the relief of the poor Saints and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, and wo be unto us if we do it not.*

Eſt tanis famelici quem tu teues, nudi tunica quam tu in conclavi conclaviconſervas, &c. Baſil. 1 Cor. 9. 16.

4. It is a great miſtake in Parents, that becauſe it is their Duty to make ſome proviſion for their Children; therefore they are bound to lay up all that poſſibly they can ſcrape together for their uſe, without giving any conſiderable part towards the relief of the poor; for thereby they manifeſtly declare, that they prefer their childrens temporal good, before their own ſpiritual and eternal good, and hazard the ſalvation of their own ſouls, for the advancement of their childrens eſtate. Oh how little comfort will it be to you in Hell-torments, to think that you have loſt heavenly joys, for the gaining of ſome earthly enjoyments for your Children? If therefore you have little or no charity for others, yet have ſome for your own ſouls by a liberal contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, and that according to your own ability, and their neceſſity.

Object. 2. Some object their poor and mean eſtate, pretending they have

have not wherewithal to ſupply the wants, and relieve the neceſſities of others.

Anſw. 1. Though thou pleadeſt poverty to excuſe thy not giving towards the ſupply of the needy and neceſſitous, yet it is to be feared, that thy plea is not real, but feigned, a meer pretence: becauſe thou canſt find money enough to buy rich and coſtly apparel for thy ſelf, wife and children; money enough to pamper thy belly, and to feaſt thy rich neighbours, friends, and acquaintance; money enough for the gratifying thy ſinful luſts and pleaſures; when thou canſt find little or nothing for the cloathing the naked backs of the poor members of Jeſus Chriſt, nothing for the filling of their empty bellies, nothing for their comfort and ſupport. Oh how ſad will thy reckoning be at the great day of judgment, when thou ſhalt hear, ſo much ſpent in cloaths, ſo much in coſtly diet, ſo much in ſatisfying thy carnal luſts and pleaſures, and ſo little in relieving the poor Saints and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt.

2. Though thy plea be real, that thou art in truth in a low and mean eſtate, yet oughteſt thou to give ſomething, when thou meeteſt with thoſe who are poorer than thy ſelf, eſpecially if they be in great neceſſity, *Eph.* 4. 28. The Apoſtle exhorteth poor men, even ſuch as work for their living, ſo to labour, that they may have not only to maintain themſelves and family, but alſo to relieve the neceſſities of others: *Let him labour*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* The deep poverty of the *Macedonians*, we read, kept them not from contributing to the poor Saints at *Jeruſalem*, who were poorer than themſelves. 2 Cor. 8. 2, 3.

Who could plead greater poverty than the poor *Widow* in the Goſpel, who having but two Mites, caſt them both into the Treaſury? of whom our Saviour giveth this teſtimony, *That ſhe caſt more into the treaſury than the rich; for all they did caſt in of their abundance, but ſhe of her want did caſt in all that ſhe had, even all her living.* An halfpenny or farthing of that little which a poor man giveth, is more in Chriſts reckoning, than a whole maſs of money out of a rich mans treaſure. Say not therefore I am poor, and have but little, thinking thereby to excuſe thy not giving; for thou canſt not be poorer than that poor *Widow*; but of a little give a little, and it will be accepted; *for if there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* God looketh not ſo much to the greatneſs of the gift, as to the quantity of the ſtore out of which it is given, and the largeneſs of the affections wherewith it is given. Mark 12. 43. 2 Cor. 8. 12.

Object. Some are ready to object and ſay, they live in dangerous times, and know not what troubles may befal them, and therefore it will be wiſdom to keep what they have.

Anſw. 1. The more dangerous the times are, the more reaſon thou haſt to give out of thy ſtore towards the relief of others; For,

1. Thou knoweſt not how long thou mayeſt enjoy thy life or eſtate, *whatſoever therefore thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*; that is, Eccleſ. 9. 10.

whatſoever ability or opportunity thou haſt of doing good, do it, as
Chap. 11. 2. with all diligence, ſo ſpeedily. And ſaith the Wiſe-man, *Give a portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight*; as if he had ſaid, let thy liberality be large and bountiful, not limiting it to few, but diſtributing to many: mark his reaſon in the next words; *for thou knoweſt not what evil ſhall be upon the earth*, i.e. what troubleſome times may be. I have read of an Husbandman, who hearing of the approach of an Army, and fearing thereby the loſs of all his Corn, cauſed as much as poſſibly he could to be carried into the City, and committed the cuſtody thereof to a friend of his. In like manner, let the apprehenſions of dangerous times prevail with thee, to deliver ſome conſiderable part of thy eſtate unto the poor members of Chriſt, whereby it will be beſt preſerved from loſs and ſpoils.

2. Thy liberality to the poor, will be a notable means to free thine heart from thoſe anxious and diſtruſtful fears of evil times, which do uſually poſſeſs the hearts of unmerciful men, as the Pſalmiſt ſeemeth to imply, *Pſalm* 112. 7, 9, *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord.* The reaſon whereof he rendreth, *Verſ.* 9, *He hath diſperſed, he hath given to the poor*; therefore he ſhall not be afraid of evil tydings. And indeed ſuch have leaſt ground of fear; For,

1. God hath promiſed to deliver ſuch from the evil to come, as *Pſal.* 41. 1, *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

2. God hath promiſed, that though they ſhould fall into troubleſome times, yet they ſhall find abundance of ſweet peace and comfort in their own ſouls; for ſaith the Lord, *If thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry, and ſatisfie the afflicted ſoul*, i.e. If thou ſhalt afford unto him that which
Iſa. 58. 10. may ſupply his neceſſity, and ſatisfie his hunger, *then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon-day.* Where *light* ſignifieth peace and comfort, as darkneſs ſignifieth affliction. So that the Prophets meaning is, that merciful men ſhall have peace and comfort, in the moſt troubleſome and uncomfortable times; which if it were ſeriouſly conſidered, would be a great encouragement to us, to abound in works of mercy.

Object. 4. Some object and ſay, If I be ſo full in giving, I may want my ſelf before I dye.

Anſw. 1. Doth the Husbandman forbear to ſow his ſeed for fear of want? Nay, rather doth he not with a plentiful hand ſow his ſeed, that he may prevent want, being confident, that by ſowing his ſeed, he ſhall in due time reap it again with ſuch encreaſe, that thereby he ſhall be inabled to ſuſtain himſelf and family. So that this Objection is a groundleſs fear, ariſing from a diſtruſtful heart, contrary to that of the Wiſeman, *Prov.* 28. 27, *He that giveth to the poor ſhall not lack*, viz. any thing which God ſeeth to be good and needful for him. Nay, by not giving, thou art likelieſt to come to want; for ſaith the ſpirit of God, *There*
Prov. 11. 24. *is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.* So that keeping

keeping back and hoarding up, is the readieſt way to want and penury; whereas giving to the poor, according to that God hath given unto us, is the beſt means to prevent penury.

2. Thou needeſt not fear want by giving; for thereby thou wilt both ſecure thy ſtock, and increaſe thy ſtore.

1. What thou giveſt to the poor, with an honeſt and ſincere heart, will ſecure the reſt of thy eſtate. For as in a State Politick, the Leiger-Ambaſſadors that are ſent abroad to lie in forraign Kingdoms, ſecure our peaceable ſtate at home. In like manner, that which thou diſperſeſt and ſendeſt abroad to the poor, doth ſecure the reſt at home. *So that in truth, our earthly goods are loſt by keeping, and kept by giving away.* *Terennaſervando amittimus, largiendo ſervamus,* Iſidor.

2. That which thou giveſt away to the poor, will increaſe thy ſtore. For *Give*, ſaith our Saviour, *and it ſhall be given unto you, good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over.* By which variety of expreſſions, our Saviour declareth, that charitable men ſhall not only receive back again from God, what they give to the poor, but abundantly more; which the Wiſe-man implieth, where he ſaith, *There is that ſcatereth, and yet encreaſeth*; intimating, that the more we ſcatter the ſeeds of our beneficence, the greater our increaſe will be. And as it followeth in the next verſe, *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fat*; *i.e.* he that is bountiful towards others, ſhall be enriched himſelf. *And he that watereth*, viz. others with his ſtore, *ſhall be watered alſo himſelf*, *i.e.* ſhall be abundantly watered with the bleſſing of God, that he may have wherewith to do more good. Whereupon ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, *He that ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly, but he that ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully*: Thereby hinting unto us, the great gain and encreaſe that we ſhall receive by a free and liberal contribution to the poor Saints and Servants of Jeſus Chriſt, which *Job* acknowledged, when he ſaid (Chap. 29. 13.) *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came upon me, i. e.* I had their prayers, and the Lord bleſſed me extraordinarily for relieving them. Luk. 6. 38. Prov. 11. 24. 2 Cor. 9. 6.

Some queſtion there is about the lawfulneſs of putting out money to uſe. But this is out of queſtion, that to put out a conſiderable part of thine eſtate to charitable uſes, is, as a lawful, ſo the moſt gainful uſury in the world; for thereby thou ſhalt receive, inſtead of ſix in the hundred, an hundred for ſix. If therefore thou wilt be wiſely covetous, fall upon the practice of this Chriſtian Uſury, knowing that the more thou ſhalt adventure therein, the greater will be thy gain, and the more bountifully thou ſhalt receive. *Eleemoſyna non eſt divitiarum diſpendium, ſed diteſcendi potius compendium, quæſtuſq; omnium uberrimus.*

Object. 5. Some object, that what they give unto the poor, is utterly loſt.

Anſw. 1. This is directly contrary to what the Spirit of God ſaith, *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord: and that which he hath given, will he repay him again.* If that which thou giveſt to the poor be repaid thee again, how can it be ſaid to be loſt? indeed the poor unto whom thou giveſt, are unable to repay thee; yet having ſuch an all-ſufficient ſurety as God himſelf, who hath undertaken the repayment, thou needeſt not doubt thereof.

2. It is a great miſtake in men, to think that what they give away to charitable uſes, is utterly loſt: For in truth a covetous ſcraping, and forbid hoarding up our wealth, is the only way of loſing it. But as I have formerly ſhewed, a chearful diſtributing part thereof to the poor, is the ſureſt way of ſecuring our ſtock, and encreaſing our ſtore. I never yet met with the man, who could ſay that he was a loſer in his eſtate, by what he gave away to charitable uſes. And this I can affirm, that very many have, and are ſtill ready to acknowledg, that as the Widows oyl encreaſed by pouring out; ſo that their ſtore hath multiplied and encreaſed by giving away to good uſes.

3. What thou giveſt to the poor is not loſt, but ſent to Heaven before thee. It is reported of *Cyrus*, that he ſhould ſay, that *by doing good he hoarded up riches for himſelf.* But ſure I am, that by communicating part of thy goods to the poor Saints and Servants of God, *thou layeſt up treaſure for thy ſelf in Heaven.*

Mat. 6. 20.

This is the very argument, wherewith the Apoſtle in the words of the Text, enforceth this Duty of liberality to the poor; for ſaith he, *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate:* Mark his reaſon in the next words, *laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come*; Where the Apoſtle intimateth, that by laying out on the poor, we do in truth lay up in ſtore for our ſelves. Look therefore how much thou layeſt out here on good uſes, by a Bill of Exchange, as it were, thou ſhalt receive as much, yea, much more in the Kingdom of Heaven; To which agreeth that of St. *Auſtin, Whatſoever we give to the poor, we ſend before us, and we ſhall find that in Heaven, which we give here on Earth.*

Quod pauperi damus ante nos præmittimus, Aug.

I have met with a notable Story to this purpoſe, which I ſhall the rather relate, becauſe I have known ſome ſo affected upon the hearing thereof, as that they have taken up preſent reſolutions, to communicate more liberally to the neceſſities of the poor, than ever they did in their lives before. The ſtory is this:

Syneſius *a good Biſhop of* Cyrene, *laboured much, and a long time with one* Evagrius *an Heathen Philoſopher, to convert him to the Chriſtian Faith, but all in vain; The Philoſopher ſtill objecting that the Chriſtian Religion taught many ſtrange and improbable things; among others,* That he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord; *and* he that giveth to the poor and needy, ſhall have treaſure in Heaven, and ſhall receive an hundred-fold from Chriſt, together with eternal life: *Things, ſaid he, to be derided, rather than believed. The good Biſhop notwithſtanding ceaſed not to travel with him, aſſuring him by many arguments, that theſe things were true, and at laſt prevailed, ſo that the Philoſopher and all his Children were baptized. A while after he cometh to* Syneſius, *and bringeth with him three hundred pounds of Gold for the poor, bids him take it, but would have a Bill under his hand, that Chriſt ſhould repay it him in another world:* Syneſius *took the money for the poor, and gave him ſuch a Bill under his hand*

hand as he desired. Afterwards the Philosopher being near his death, commanded his Sons, that when they buried him, they should put Synesius's *Bill into his hand in the grave, which they did. The third day after he was buried, the Philosopher seemed to appear to* Synesius *in the night, and said to him,* [Come to my Sepulchre where I lye, and take thy Bill; for I have received the Debt, and am satisfied; which for thy assurance, I have subscribed it with mine own hand]. *The Bishop not well knowing the meaning hereof, sent to his Sons, who told him all, whereupon taking them and the chief men of the City with him, he went to the grave, and found the paper in the hand of the Corps, thus subscribed,* [Ego *Evagrius* Philosophus, tibi Sanctissimo Domino *Synesio* Episcopo, salutem: Accepi debitum in his literis manu tua conscriptum, satisfactumque mihi est; & nullum contra te habeo jus propter aurum quod dedi tibi, & per te Christo Deo & Salvatori nostro]. *That is, I* Evagrius *the Philosopher, to the most Holy Sir, Bishop* Synesius, *greeting: I have received the debt which in this paper is written with thy hand, and I am satisfied: and I have no action against thee, for the Gold which I gave thee, and by thee to Christ, our God and Saviour.*

This Story, I say, I was willing to relate at large, not only because it passeth in antiquity for a great (though strange) truth, but also, because, as I fare, I have known it reported to some, with such good effect and success, as I hope and heartily wish it may have upon thy Spirit.

4. Thy works of Charity to the poor Saints and Servants of Jesus Christ, will hereafter be rewarded with everlasting glory and happiness in Heaven. So much our Saviour expresseth by declaring, that the *Kingdom of Heaven was from the foundation of the world, prepared for the merciful*; who had shewed themselves bountiful to the poor members of Jesus Christ, by cloathing the naked, feeding the hungry, *&c.* And saith our Saviour, *Mat.* 10. 41, *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward; and he that receiveth a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous man, shall receive a Righteous mans reward. As by receiving a Righteous man in the name of a Righteous man,* is to shew kindness to him for his Righteousness sake; so *by receiving a Prophet in the name of a Prophet,* is not only a receiving of his Message and Ministry, but also a receiving of his person, by shewing kindness unto him, either in entertaining of him, or contributing to his needs and necessities, and that as he is a Minister of the Gospel. And by the Prophets and Righteous mans *reward,* which such shall receive as relieve them; is meant, that surpassing and excellent weight of glory in Heaven, which cannot be expressed by the tongue of men or Angels. Not that their works of charity do merit that Glorious reward, but in regard of the promise of God made to all those, who in faith apply themselves to the practise of good works. Matt. 25. 34, 35.

Object. 6. Many there are who make a great profession of Religion, but manifest little power thereof in their lives, being as backward to any good work, and as barren therein as any whosoever.

Answ.

Anſw. I muſt confeſs, there is more truth in this objection, than in any I have yet met withal. For I cannot but acknowledg, there are too many whoſe leaves of profeſſion are very broad, but their fruits of charity and liberality are very ſmall; who are a ſhame to Religion, a reproach to Chriſtianity, and a ſcandal to profeſſion.

But this may be taken for an anſwer, That whereas many who make a profeſſion of Religion, are barren in good works: queſtionleſs they are no ſincere Chriſtians, no true Converts, but meer outſide Profeſſors. For
Col. 3. 12. moſt certain it is, that *the elect of God put on bowels of mercy*, as the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaketh. Therefore, whoſoever he be that having this worlds good, doth make a profeſſion of Religion, and yet ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from his poor brother, and will not communicate towards his neceſſities, let his profeſſion be never ſo ſpecious and glorious in the eyes of men, yet certainly he is but a rotten profeſſor, and diſſembling hypocrite in the ſight of God; for ſaith the Apoſtle St. *James*, *Pure re-*
Jam 1. 27. *ligion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to viſit the Fatherleſs and Widows in their affliction:* Implying, that works of charity are clear evidences of the truth of our Religion, and the ſincerity of our profeſſion. If you look into the Scripture, you ſhall ſcarce read of a man truly Godly, but he was charitable; nay, according to his eminence in Godlineſs, he was eminent in works of Charity: to inſtance in ſome few.

Abraham, the Father of the faithful, as he was eminent in Godlineſs, ſo was he eminent in Hoſpitality, which is one of the nobleſt works of
Gen. 18. 1, 2. Charity: For we read how *Abraham ſtood at his Tent door, and no ſooner ſaw ſtrangers paſſing by, but called them in, and gave them entertainment.*

As there was none like *Job* in his days for Piety and Godlineſs, of
Job 1. 8. whom God himſelf giveth this teſtimony, *That there was none like* Job *in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God, and eſchewed evil:* So neither was there any like *Job* for liberality. Note what he
Chap. 29. 13. ſaith of himſelf, *The bleſſing of him that was ready to periſh, came upon me*; *i. e.* I had many good prayers, and well-wiſhes from them, whom I had relieved in their low and periſhing condition, *and I cauſed the Widows heart to ſing for joy*; *i. e.* by my bounty and liberality to her in her neceſſity, I gave her great cauſe of hearty joy. And afterwards *Job* declareth how *he had not*, according to the manner of covetous and churliſh perſons, *eaten his meat alone, without giving part thereof to the hungry*
Chap. 31. 17. Verſ. 19. *Orphans. Neither had he ſeen any periſh for want of cloathing:* Under which expreſſions are implied, his readineſs to feed the hungry, and cloath the naked, with other like acts of charity.

It is recorded to the perpetual praiſe and commendation of good *Obadiah*, that in the time of famine and perſecution, he not only hid the Pro-
1 King 18. 4. phets of God by fifty in a Cave, from the cruelty of *Jezebel*, but that alſo in that extream dearth, there ſuſtained them with food, and ſupplied their neceſſities.

We read of *Cornelius*, who as he was a godly and devout man, ſo he was very charitable, for the Spirit of God giveth this teſtimony of him,

That

That he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the poor; He was not only charitable, but did abound in works of charity, *giving much alms to the poor.* Acts 10. 4.

We likewise read of *Gaius*, who is recorded to be a Godly, Wealthy Citizen of *Corinth*, that he did usually in his house entertain, not only the Apostle *Paul*, but also all Christians resorting to that City. Rom 16. 23.

The Apostle *Paul*, who was an holy, zealous Christian, was likewise charitable; for in his Epistle to *Timothy*, reckoning up some of his graces, as his faith, patience, long-suffering, *&c.* he mentions *Charity*. 2 Tim. 3. 10.

Yea, we read of *Zacheus*, that though before his conversion, he was a most covetous extortioner, yet after his conversion, he gave the half of his Goods to the poor; for said he, *Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.* Luke 19. 8.

But the most remarkable, is the Charity of the Primitive Christians, who being converted by the Ministry of the Apostles, and having embraced the Christian Faith, it is said, that *as many of them as were possessors of lands, or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles feet, and distribution was made unto every man, according to his need.* Thus you see it hath ever been the property of a sincere Christian, and true believer, to be charitable. And certainly, whosoever by a true and lively faith, are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, cannot but be fruitful branches, bringing forth the fruits of mercy and compassion, of charity and liberality towards their poor brethren. Acts 4. 34. 35.

I shall conclude therefore with a passage of a reverend Divine, now with God. Mr. *Rob. Bolton*: in his Directions for a comfortable walking with God, *p.* 262.

If the world hath locked up thine heart, and congealed the bowels of thy compassion towards the poor; let the blaze of thine outward profession shine never so fair; manage the heartless representation of external holiness never so demurely; keep the times and tasks of daily duties, with never so great austerity; nay, though thou be able to amaze weaker Christians with some affected strains, and artificial-fervency in Prayer; for all this, if the holy heat of brotherly love doth not warm thine heart, and upon occasion work affectionately and effectually; I dare say, thou art rotten at the heart root, there is no true love of God in thee, no grace, no hope of salvation.

Let that terrible and flaming place against all covetous Pharisees, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14, *Who so hath this worlds goods, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let it, I say, dissolve thy frozen-heartedness this way, and enlarge the bowels of pity towards thy poor brethren of Christ Jesus, or else never look hereafter to look him in the face with comfort, or to find mercy at that day.*

If

If we must aim at Assurance, what should they do that are not able to discern their own spiritual condition?

1 Joh. 5. 13.

These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have Eternal Life.

THE greatness of the mercy, in having of the Scripture, is manifested by the great advantages that the Elect of God receive thereby: *viz.* (*a*) that they might be brought to close with Christ by faith unfeigned, and be partakers of eternal life through him; that bad men might be made good, and that good men might be made sure of an eternal blessed state in the life to come, whereby the Lord hath abundantly provided both for our happiness and our comfort, for our happiness, that we may have eternal life: (*b*) for our comfort, that we may know we have eternal life. I cannot stay to view the context, I need not stay to explain the Text. The case of Conscience to be treated of, from this Scripture is this:

a Joh. 20. 31.

b 1 Joh. 1. 4. Rom. 15. 4.

Since men may know that they have eternal life, what must they do that cannot discern their spiritual Condition?

Here are two things to be performed.

First, That we may know in this life, that we shall *certainly* be partakers of eternal glory in the life to come. For if assurance be not possible, I can neither blame you for wanting it, nor stir you up to labour after it.

Secondly, Lay down some Rules for the getting of it, and directions, if by these rules we cannot for the present obtain it.

For the stating of the first part of the Question, concerning the possibility of getting this certa n knowledg of our future Happiness, I shall lay before you these six positions.

1. *Po-*

1. *Position.*

1. An unregenerate person, while (*c*) such, can have no assurance, or certain knowledg of the eternal salvation of his Immortal soul: Because *as such*, he hath no actual interest in the promises of salvation, being without the conditions of faith and repentance, to which the promises are made, being a child of (*d*) wrath, (*e*) a slave to his lusts, a (*f*) captive to the Devil, a (g) rejector of the Son of God. This man hath *plague-sores, tokens* of eternal death. I cannot say thou shalt be infallibly damned, because thou (*h*) mayest repent and believe; and thou canst not say, thou shalt be saved, because thou hast not yet repented for thy sin, nor believed on the Son of God. A wicked man is not *subjectum capax*, a subject capable of this assurance, *Eph.* 1. 13. *In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.* It is not the hard stone, but the soft wax that receiveth the Impression of the seal. If he hope for Salvation while he liveth, and dyeth in a natural condition, he shall lose his hope (*i*) and soul together: this presumption will prove self-delusion, and end in desperation. He is worse than a *Pharisee*, (*k*) whether he be a private person, or a *Preacher*, that liveth in gross sins, hating the power of godliness, and discouraging holiness, that yet blesseth God for election, justification, sanctification, and assured hope of glory.

c John 3. 36. 1 Joh. 5. 10, 12.
d Eph. 2. 3.
e Tit. 3. 3.
f 2 Tim. 2. 26.
g Joh. 5. 40, 43. Mark. 2. 10.
h 1 Tim. 2. 25.
i Job 11. 20. & 8. 3, 4. & 8. 4
k Luke 18. 11.

2. *Position.*

2. That many of Gods dear Children (*l*) for a long time might remain very doubtful as to their present and eternal condition, and know not what to conclude, whether they shall be damned, or whether they shall be saved. There are believers of several growths in the Church of God: (*m*) Fathers, young men, Children, and (*n*) Babes; and as in most families, there are more babes and children, than grown men; so in the Church of God, there are more weak doubting Christians, than strong ones, grown up to a full assurance. A babe may be born, and yet not know it, so a man may be born again, and not be sure of it. Sometimes they think they have grounds of hope, that they shall be saved, sometimes they think they have grounds of fears, that they shall be condemned: not knowing which might be most weighty, like a pair of balances, they are in equal poyse. *Zach.* 14. 6. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear nor dark.* It is spoken primarily of Gods providential dispensations towards his Church in Gospel-times; For a while she should live *in Crepusculo*, in twilight, in a mixt condition of light and darkness, comfort and affliction; like a man in a misty morning, that neither walketh in the dark, nor yet hath the light clear to see far before him; like *Paul* and the Mariners, that saw neither Sun nor Stars for many days (*o*), so might it be with a particular person, in reference to his spiritual condition.

l Psal. 77. 1. to the 10 ver. & 88. 4, 15, 16. Isa. 50. 10.
m 1 Joh. 2. 13, 14.
n 1 Pet. 2 2.
o Acts 27. 20.

By this you see,

First, We make a difference betwixt saving faith, *as such*, and a full perswasion of the heart.

Secondly, That some of those that shall be certainly saved, might not

be certain that they shall be saved; for the promise is made to the grace of faith, and not to the evidence of it. To faith as true, and not as strong; they may be sure of Heaven, and yet in their own sense not assured of Heaven. As an Infant may be born to a great estate, and have a certain title to it, but yet he might not know it, or make it out to himself or others. So that the Question is not *de certitudine objecti*, of the certainty of Salvation, but *de certitudine subjecti*, of the apprehension, sense, and knowledg of the believing person, concerning his salvation.

3. *Position.*

3. That a believer may not only in the general, gather from the word of God (*p*), from the death of Christ (*q*), from the glorious preparation God hath made (*r*), that many shall be infallibly brought to glory; but also, that he in particular shall be one of them. This must have its proof after; I therefore now pass on.

p Mat. 8. 11. & 25, 34. *q* Mat. 20. 28. *r* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.

4. *Position.*

4. That we are not to expect any voice from Heaven, or Gods sending of an Angel, or extraordinary Revelation, to make us to know that we do believe, or shall be saved; but to make use of those helps and means appointed by God, common to all believers, but yet sufficient for the obtaining of this particular assurance. This I put in, because the Papists grant it may be got by extraordinary Revelation, but not else; As it is their wicked practise to keep the people most ignorant of those things, of which they should have most knowledg, that following them with an implicite faith, and blind obedience, might not scruple at their Humane Traditions, and unwarrantable, and many (*s*) ridiculous Innovations that have crept in amongst them; so they keep them most doubtful, where they should be most sure, and so the Council of *Trent* (*t*). If any may say that he knoweth, he shall certainly persevere, or infallibly be assured of his election, except he have this by special Revelation, let him be Anathema. A wicked Council, that Anathematizeth a man for asserting, that may be obtained which God commandeth him to get! 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, *Make your calling and election sure.*

s Bellarmin, de Baptismo. Tom. 3. *lib* 1. *cap.* 25. 26, 27. mentioneth 22 Ceremonies about Baptism, Exorcism, Salt, Spittle, Cross, Unction, Wax, taper lighted, in token that the baptized person is translated from the power of darkness unto light, &c.

5. *Position.*

5. That such as have been filled with divine joy, through well-grounded apprehensions of their present grace, and future glory, might lose that assurance, and that joy (*u*), and this may be; 1. From God acting, 1. As (*x*) a Soveraign Lord. 2. As a wise God, putting a more eminent difference betwixt Earth and (*y*) Heaven. Or, 2. From the buffetings of Satan. Or, 3. From themselves, 1. For the trial and exercise of some of their graces (*z*). Or, 2. For correcting them for sin (*a*). As, 1. For their backwardness to duty (*b*). 2. Slothfulness in

t Si quis dixerit, hominem renatum & justificatum teneri ex fide ad credendum se certo esse, ex numero prædestinatorum Anathema sit. Concil. Triden. sess. 6. can. 15. And again, *Si quis dixerit magnum illud usque in finem perseverantiæ donum se certo habiturum absoluta & infallibili certitudine, nisi hoc ex speciali revelatione dicerit Anathema sit.* Concil. Triden. sess. 6. can. 16. *u* Psal. 30. 7. Cant. 1. 5. *x* Job 9. 17. *y* Psal. 33, 1. with 1 Cor. 13. 12. *z* Job 1. 1. with Job 13. 24. Isa. 8. 17. *a* Isa. 59. 2. *b* Cant. 5. 2, 3, 6.

duty.

duty. 3. Frequent ſtrong actings of pride in and after duty. 4. Letting down their ſpiritual watch; and ſo, 5. Falling into ſome notorious tranſgreſſion (*c*). Or, 6. For not ſetting a due eſteem upon the comforts of the ſpirit (*d*). Or, 7. Inſulting too much over weak believers; not exerciſing tender compaſſion to dejected drooping Chriſtians. 8. For their too much Earthly-mindedneſs. 9. Not riſing preſently by repentance (*e*); for theſe reaſons and the like, their Sun might be eclipſed, a winter of ſorrows might follow their ſummer-joys. They may loſe their evidence, but not their adherence; and though there ſhall not be any *interceſſion* of juſtification, yet there might be afterwards a *non apprehenſion* of it.

c 2. Sam. 11. 4, 13, 15. comp. Pſal. 51. 8, 12.
d Job 15. 11.
e Iſa. 57. 17.

6. Poſition.

6. That in divers men, there are divers degrees of this aſſurance, and in the ſame man different degrees at divers times; but in no man at any time in this life perfection of degrees; For our underſtanding is imperfect, both as to the faculty and its acts. And though the mind is curing, yet it will not be perfectly cured in this life, from that darkneſs that befel it by mans Apoſtacy from God. For we have but an imperfect knowledg of Faith and Love: and while we have but an imperfect knowledg of the premiſes, we cannot give a perfect aſſent to the concluſion. And no man hath ſuch perfection of degrees, of the aſſurance of his ſalvation, *in an ordinary way*, as that one degree more cannot be added to the former; neither is there any repugnancy in aſſerting an infallible aſſurance, and denying a perfect aſſurance; for I infallibly know that there is a God, and that this God is good and juſt; and yet I have not a perfect knowledg of a deity, or of his goodneſs and juſtice; for in this life we know but in part, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11, 22.

There are three ways that we come to a certainty.

A threefold certainty.

1. There is a certainty that comes by ſenſe, which cannot err about its proper object, when there is a due diſtance, a fit diſpoſition of the Organ, and the medium rightly diſpoſed: thus *Thomas* was certain of Chriſts reſurrection from the dead. *John* 20. 25, *The other Diſciples ſaid unto him, we have ſeen the Lord: but he ſaid unto them, except I ſhall ſee in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thruſt my hand into his ſide, I will not believe.* Verſe 27. *He ſaith to* Thomas, *reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: reach hither thy hand, and thruſt it into my ſide, and be not faithleſs, but believing.* Verſe 28. *And* Thomas *anſwered and ſaid, My Lord, and my God.* Though the other Diſciples told him they had ſeen the Lord, yet he would not take it for a certainty from their report, except he had a certainty from his own ſenſe. But the Papiſts do not only deny us a certainty of faith, but alſo a certainty of ſenſe; for though in the Sacrament we ſee it is real bread, and taſte it to be real bread, and feel, and handle it as real bread; yet contrary to our ſenſe, would have us believe, and ſay it is tranſubſtantiated.

2. There is a certainty of science, or knowledg arising from first principles, received by all, that are proved by their own light, that cannot be demonstrated *a priori*, because there is nothing true before them; as a man cannot shew you the Sun, but by its own light: So I certainly know, that both parts of a contradiction cannot be true; so I certainly know, that the whole is greater than any particular part.

3. There is a certainty of authority, or testimony. If the testimony be humane, it begets but a moral perswasion, for no humane testimony is of necessary verity, because truth is not necessarily, but contingently and mutably in the man that gives this testimony; and the testimony hath not its cogency or validity from it self, but from the qualifications of the person that bears the testimony, whence there is a gradual certainty in humane testimonies; only God is so *necessarily* true, that it should imply a contradiction that he should be God, and yet lye. *God cannot lye, Tit.* 1. 2. So that a Divine testimony begets a certainty of divine Faith; for what God saith, I undoubtedly know to be true, because truth is (*e*) essential to him; for if truth be necessary to the Testator, the truth of the testimony must necessarily be (*f*) true: so I know that the impenitent unbelieving person that dieth without grace, and an interest in Christ, shall certainly (*g*) be damned, because God hath said it, as if I saw him in his misery; and I know that the Penitent, believing, self-denying, and sin-mortifying-Christian, shall be (*h*) saved, because God hath said it, as certainly, as if I saw him actually possessed of it already.

e Deut. 32. 4. & 34. 6. Heb. 6. 18.
f Joh. 17. 17.
g Mar. 16. 16. Rom. 2. 4, 5. Heb. 12. 14.
h Mat. 5. 8. Rom. 8. 13. Acts 10. 43.
* *In lingua sacra, vau cum Pathach sequente dagesh futurum in præteritum convertit, nam presens proprium, Hebræi nullum habent.*

When faith hath this divine testimony to lean upon, it ariseth in some by degrees to a full assurance. There are especially four words in the Scripture, that set forth faith in its different degrees.

i Heb. 11. 17.
* ἔλεγχος ἐστι συλλόγισμος τῆς ἀντιφάσεως. *Arist de reprehensi. l.* 1. *cap.* 8. And so used by the Apostle, 2 Tim. 3. 16. The Scripture is profitable, πρὸς ἔλεγχον To convince the enemies of the truth; it signifieth conviction, plain and evident. Joh. 8. 9. & 16. 8.

1. As it is said to be ὑποστασις, *Heb.* 11. 8. *The substance, subsistence, existence of things:* Looking upon things future, as certain as if they were present; among the Hebrews there is usual, a mutation of tenses, turning the future into the præter-tense. * Faith is the believers *Pathach*, making things to come as certain to him, as if he did already enjoy them; and putteth a date upon the joys of the life to come, before he is possessed of them. *Noahs* faith assured him of the flood, as certainly as if it had then been, when it was first (*i*) foretold; it is a *demonstration* of things not seen; faith seeth things that cannot be seen. That way of argumentation whereby error is confuted, by *Aristotle* is called ἔλεγχος, * the word here used. But here for a certain conviction, arising from divine authority, shewing us such things which sense cannot perceive, and reason cannot comprehend. When faith thus represents these glorious things to come thus unto the believing soul, then there is πεποίθησις, a good perswasion of the heart, or a holy confidence; and from this perswasion there ariseth παῤῥησια, an humble boldness, or liberty, and freedom of speech to God in prayer, which *de jure*, all believers have; these words you have together, in *Ephes.* 2. 12, *In whom we have boldness, and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

And

And from these resulteth that desirable πληροφορία, a full assurance of a future enjoyment of those things that faith presents unto us, and we are perswaded of our title to; and with liberty, freedom, and enlargedness of soul have prayed unto God for. So the Question is not concerning all men, but believers; and not whether all believers have it, but may have it; not by revelation, but by ordinary means; not whether they always keep it; nor about perfect, but certain infallible assurance in these words: thus,

A believer may without extraordinary Revelation, certainly know and be infallibly assured of eternal life. The question stated.

And this will be made evident by the proof of these two Propositions.

1. That a believer without extraordinary revelation, might certainly know that he hath justifying faith, and unfeigned love to Christ, and that he is upright and sincere with God. 1. Arg. from special grace.

2. That there is an infallible connexion between these special graces, and future glory. *That a man may certainly know his sincerity, faith, and love, is evidenced by these Particulars.*

1. God hath laid down in his word certain infallibe γνωρίσματα, Characters, Signs, Discoveries of sincerity, Justifying faith, and Unfeigned love to God; besides other topical heads, we may know it from the effects which it doth always produce; that where I see such an effect of faith, I know there is faith: And Papists must make us cast away all Logick, if we shall not have this granted. I see the broad clear light shining in mine eyes, therefore I know the Sun is risen; and when we see any sign, that is concomitant, or consequent, inseparable and proper to the thing of which it is a sign, we know that that thing is. A man that is sick and weak, yet feels his heart to leap and pant, he knows he is a living man; a man that discourseth, and rationally inferreth one thing from another, knoweth that he hath a reasonable soul, and that he is a man. There are as *certain Characters* in the word of God of sincerity, faith and love, as there are *plain injunctions* that we should be sincere, believe and love: Would God command a man to examine himself whether he be in the faith, if there were not rules suitable and sufficient to direct us to know the nature of faith, and wherein it doth consist? First Proposition which sheweth that a man might know he hath saving Grace. *Posito effectu in esse effectus ponitur causa.*

2. God hath given to a man a power to understand, consider, deliberate, and reflect upon himself, and judg of himself and of his ways: herein a man is above a bruit; a beast likes his pasture, but cannot know his propriety. Certainly a man that is not a stranger to himself, but a diligent observer of the actings of his soul, might know what they are, yea, and discern the moral modifications of those acts. *For Conscience is privy to the prineiple and spring of all our actings, to the manner and the end.* If I love a man, by reflecting upon my self, I know I love him; and shall this noble power of the soul be only useless, in the greatest concernments of my soul? Can I know what I approve, esteem most, and delight in most, and breathe, and pant after most, in other things, and not in this? it is true, conscience is naturally blind in spiritual things, but yet

ψυχὴ φωῖ λάμπεσθαι, ὦ τὴν ἀληθειαν ὁρᾷ τὴν πάντων καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ. *Antonin.* l. 11. ss. 12. *Edit. cant.* 1652.

τὰ ἰδια τῆς λογικῆς ψυχῆς. ἑαυτὴν ὀρᾷ ἑαυτὴν ἀρθοῖ, ἑαυτὴν ὁποίαν ἄν βέλνται, ποιῶ. *Idem.* l. 11. ss. 1.

yet directed by the word, and inlightned by the ſpirit, might paſs a judgment upon a man: For as the Moon borroweth light from the Sun, and ſo communicateth light unto the world, which elſe it could not do: ſo conſcience receiving light from the word, and ſpirit, diſcovereth what elſe it could not do. So it is called the candle of the Lord, *Prov.* 20. 27, *The ſpirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, ſearching all the inward parts of the belly:* Not only taking notice of the outward acts in the life, but the inward motions of the heart; not only of ſome, but it hath a power to take cognizance of them all: Conſcience is like the urine, which diſcovereth whether a perſon be ſound in health, or ſhews what his diſtemper is. By the Eccho, cauſed by the reflection of the ſound, a man heareth his word after he hath ſpoken it: ſo by the reflecting-power of conſcience, a man views his actions after they are done, and hears his words after they be ſpoken. A man ſees his ſpots or beauty in the glaſs, by the reflection of the ſpecies that do repreſent them to his view. As *Joſephs* brethrens conſciences told them that they were true men, and not (*l*) ſpies; ſo conſcience may truly tell a man, that he is ſincere, and not an hypocrite. Thus conſcience is ſaid to be a witneſs, *Rom.* 9. 1, *I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lye not: my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the Holy Ghoſt*; to accuſe, and to excuſe, *Rom.* 2. 15. So it is a judg, condemning or acquitting, according as a mans ſtate is found to be. So much Heathens have ſpoken of conſcience *.

l Gen. 42. 31.

* τὸ συνειδὸς αὐτὸ ἐϛι δικαϛὴς ὁ δικαιοτα]ϕ, ἅμα καὶ οἰκειοτα]ϕ. *Hieroc.* Comment in *Pytha. Carm.*

Now that the Scripture containeth Characters of ſincerity, and that a man comparing himſelf by thoſe Characters, might certainly know that he is ſincere, will be evidenced by theſe Scriptures, *Pſal.* 19. 13, *Keep back thy ſervant from preſumptuous ſins, let them not have dominion over me:* then mark [*then*] *ſhall I be upright.* When there is no one known ſin, but a man is really willing ſhould be mortified and parted with, his *moſt beloved* ſin that is neareſt to him, which by way of propriety he may call his own, in an eſpecial manner, which is the laſt ſin a man parteth with; and if there be any ſin which a man is unwilling to part with, and will keep a man off from Chriſt, it is his boſom ſin, his darling; and the truth is, that if any man keep, love any one ſin, which he will not let go, to cloſe fully with Chriſt, let his profeſſion be never ſo great, he is an hypocrite. Some men part with Chriſt for one luſt, for one ſin, *Luk.* 18. 22, *When Jeſus heard theſe things*, how far he had gone, how much he had done, *he ſaid unto him, yet lackeſt thou one thing.* Love to his riches, and prizing them more than Chriſt, was his ruine; one ſtab at the heart with a Pen-knife, will as certainly kill a man, as a thouſand wounds with a ſword; one diſeaſe that is mortal, will as certainly bring a man to his grave, as twenty; and one leak in a ſhip will ſink it, as well as more. *Herod* did many things, but yet he would not let go his *Herodias*, *Mark* 6. 17, 18, 19, 20. It is a ſure rule, that which a man loves moſt, he will endeavour to keep longeſt; skin for skin, all that a man hath, will he give for his life. A man prizeth his right hand much, but his head more; and therefore to ſave his head, he will hold up his hand, and venture the loſs of the one to ſave the other. There may be many

Unfeigned willingneſs to part with, and mortifie every ſin, a ſure ſign of ſaving grace.

ſins

sins a man might love, but one especially; and he may be willing the other should be pared off to preserve that; but when he is willing to leave all, to indulge himself in none, no not his darling sin, it is a sign of sincerity. Consult these Scriptures, *Psal.* 17. 1, 3, 4. *Psal.* 119. 1, 2, 3, 6. *Job* 1. 8. & 2, 3. & 31. chap. throughout.

Now a man may by diligent enquiry find out his beloved sin, and he may know, and his Conscience may bear him witness of his willingness to part with this, to have it subdued, and that by the grace of God he doth keep himself from it, that it bears not rule, nor dominion in his soul, *Psal.* 18. 23, *I was also upright before him.* How doth *David* manifest this? by the observation of his heart, and ways in this particular; for it followeth, *and I kept my self from mine iniquity.* There is as much power of God required, and strength of grace, to make a man part with his beloved sin, as all the rest. Thus *Hezekiah* knew his sincerity, *Isa.* 38. 3. He had the testimony of his Conscience, and was sure of it, else how could he have made his appeal to God? *Remember now, oh Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

A man may know whether he be thus willing to part with sin.

Likewise that a man might certainly know he hath justifying Faith, is proved from 2 *Cor.* 13. 5, *Examine your selves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves: Know ye not your own selves, how that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates.* Doth God so strictly charge us to know hat which cannot be known? that that Faith here spoken of, that we must enquire after, is a justifying Faith, appears from the Text.

True Faith might be discovered in us.

1. By this Christ dwelleth in us, and so not by any other faith.

2. Because without this faith we are ἀδόκιμοι Reprobates, not as opposed to the Elect, but denoting persons unsound and hypocritical. It is also not a conjecture, but a certain knowledg that we are pressed to obtain, by the word that the Holy Ghost useth, *search, make tryal,* as God tried *Abraham, Gen.* 22. 1, that his love to God, and fear of God appeared. Prove, as the Gold-smith doth his Metals in the Fire, or by the Touch-stone; because he bids us prove it not so much by argument, as experience; for so the word is used, *Luke* 14. 19. He went to prove his Oxen: and forasmuch as we must prove our selves to be in Christ, we must not leave it uncertain; *for what is uncertain after tryal, is not proved.*

πειράζετε δοκιμάζετε.

Besides that we do believe, we might know by the *judgments valuing, the wills chusing, and the affections loving Christ above all,* 1 Pet. 2. 7. *To you that believe he is precious*; Christ is an honour to the Believer, and Christ is most prized and valued by the Believer: And cannot a man know what he prizeth most? What he valueth and esteemeth most? what his understanding doth dictate to him, to be chosen above all? and whether his will doth chuse according to the dictates of the understanding? and the affections, love, and desire, are upon the wing to enjoy what the will doth make choice of? and grief filleth the heart when he cannot obtain it?

A note of true faith.

τιμὴ for ἔντιμον. *Piscat. in Loc.*

it? Could not *Ahab* know that he prized *Naboths* Vineyard, when he grieved because he could not get it? and all that he had was lessened, by the want of what he prized so much? So doth the Soul cry out, Riches is nothing without Christ, and Honour and Friends cannot remove the grief of his heart, till Christ comes into his heart, and manifests himself there; cannot he know it, by his care to get, by his fear to lose, by his determining what to do, in case he must lose that which he prizeth most, or all other things besides? he will part with all, though very desirable, as a Mariner will cast away his richest Goods in a Tempest, to save his life; *which think you doth he prize most? A woman if her house be on fire, suffers all her Pewter to be consumed in the flames, so that she may but save her child; is it not apparent which she valueth most? All shall go, that thou mayest keep Christ, if thou prize him most. This is known by the delight of the heart in the enjoyment of that which a man valueth most in the want of other things; thou canst delight in Christ, in poverty, affliction, in the midst of troubles in the world.

* As *Aristippus* cast his gold into the Sea, saying, *Satius est, ut, hæc per Aristippum, quam propter hæc pereat Aristippus,* It is better these things perish by *Aristippus*, than *Aristippus* by these things.

So likewise for love; is it not possible for a man to know that he loveth Christ above all? how else could *Peter*, when asked three times by Christ, whether he loved him, answer three times, that he did love him, and did appeal to Christ that knew his heart, that he spake truly, because he knew he loved him sincerely; and this is observable, that this was after *Peters* fall, by which he had learned to have a holy jealousie over his own heart, and Christ doth not intimate any deceitfulness in his heart in this, as he did before when he said (*m*) twice, that he would not deny him.

m Matt. 26. 33, 35.

By the effects of love, we may certainly know that we love him.

Signs of true love to God.

1. By thy unfeigned desires to be like unto him: we love to imitate those whom we dearly love; love produceth assimilation; if he be holy, so wouldst thou be; if he hate sin, so dost thou.

2. By thy hearty desire to be united to him, to have him with thee: *his presence thou dost desire, his absence thou canst not bear without mourning and complaints, and wishing, oh that I could see him: oh that I could meet with him: and therefore thou goest from duty to duty, from ordinance to ordinance, from thy prayers in thy Closet, to the Congregation, if thou mightest find him there; from the Word to the Sacrament, if thou mightest find him there; if he come unto thee, thou rejoycest: if he withdraw himself, thy soul is troubled.

* *Nihil magis gregale quam amor, omnium rerum patientissimus nisi solitudinis, societate gaudet & extorquet consortem. Nieromb. De art. Vo.* p. 333.

3. By thy great care to please him, fear to offend him, and *resigning thy self to him. When it grieveth thy heart to grieve thy Lord, and it breaks thy heart when thou breakest his Commands, John 14. 15, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* Verse 21, *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.*——1 John 2. cap. 3, *And hereby we know that we know* (including this affection of love unto) *him.* Verse 4 *He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a lyar, and the truth is not in him.*

* *Se a se aufert amans, & amato tradit.*

Verse

Verse 5, *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected:* Hereby we [know] that we are in him, 1 *John* 5. 3, *For this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous,* because of the love we have to him that doth command.

4. By the love that we bear unto his image, in whomsoever we do see it, and love them that are like to Christ, so much, that we could deny our selves of honours, and profits, were it necessary, and God should call us to it, to do them good; as we love Christ above all, so we love his likeness in others, and the believer for Christs sake above outward things; that if he be in necessity we do not only wish him well, but part with something; and if God and the Law of nature did not require us to lay it out first for necessary provision for our families, could part with all to help them in their great (*n*) necessity. Now this sincere love to the people of God, is an Evidence of the goodness of our spiritual condition, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14, *We know that we have passed from death to life.* How? not by extraordinary revelation, but by this rational argumentation, *because we love the brethren:* and Verse 18, *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* And Verse 19, *And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*

Amor ecchо. The soul that loves God, doth eccho to Gods commands. *Psal.* 27. 8. When thou saidest—my heart said.—

n Act. 4. 32, 34, 35, 37. 1 Joh. 3. 16, 17.

But here the Papists do not only cavil, but the drooping distressed Christian also questioneth all this, because of the deceitfulness of the heart. Alas the Scripture tells us, that the heart of man is desperately wicked, and deceitful above all things, (*o*) who can know it? And if the heart of man cannot be known, how can we say, we believe, or love God? For this consider these four things.

o From *Jer.* 11. 9. The Papist cavils, the drooping Christian doubts.

1. Another man cannot know it; I cannot certainly and infallibly know whether another man be sincere, or what his heart is; for it is the prerogative and excellency of God to be καρδιογνωστης one that knows the hearts of all men, *Acts* 1. 24.

2. A wicked mans heart is so wicked, and there is such a depth of wickedness in his heart, that he cannot come to the bottom of it.

3. If a man cannot know all the secret turnings, and windings of his heart, yet he may know the general scope, and frame of his heart.

4. If he could not do this of himself, yet assisted by the spirit of God, which all believers have received, he might know the frame, bent, scope, inclination of his own heart.

Thus far the first Proposition, that a man may know that he hath sincere faith in Christ, and love to God. Now we proceed to the second.

Second Proposition is this; *That there is an infallible connexion between justifying faith, unfeigned love, and eternal glory.*

2 Proposition, which shews the connexion between grace and glory.

The Apostle tells us of some things that may be called ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, *Heb.* 6. 9, *Things that accompany salvation.* Having, or containing salvation, that are so contiguous to salvation, that the one toucheth

the other, this muſt be proved; for elſe though I know I do believe and love God ſincerely to day, I can have no infallible aſſurance of ſalvation, becauſe this may be loſt before to morrow, or before I dye. Now this I ſhall endeavour to prove by theſe three following particulars.

[1 From the verity of Gods promiſes.

1. *The undoubted verity of Gods promiſes, proveth an inſeperable connexion between ſincere Grace and eternal Glory.* Faith is the eye of the ſoul, and with it, through a promiſe, as through a Proſpective-glaſs, can the ſoul have a view of Heaven and Glory. What greater certainty or ſecurity can a man have, than the infallibe promiſe of that God who is truth it ſelf; who will not deny his Word, but the ſame Love and free Grace that moved him to infuſe Grace into thy heart, and to make the promiſe, will move him alſo to give the thing promiſed? *John* 3. 16, *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* John 5, 24, *He that believeth, hath everlaſting life:* He hath in it the Promiſe, he hath it in the firſt fruits, *Rom.* 8. 23. ——*But we our ſelves alſo which have the firſt fruits of the ſpirit.*——The *Jews* by offering their firſt-fruits, did teſtifie their thankfulneſs to God for what they had received, and hopes of the full crop in due time. He *hath everlaſting life*, then it muſt not end, *Mark* 16. 16, *He that believeth and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved: He that believeth not, ſhall be damned.* As certainly as the unbeliever ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs, ſo certainly ſhall the believer be partaker of the glorious inheritance of the Saints in Light, The promiſe is as true as the threatning. Acts 16. 30, 31, there you ſee a poor, convinced, wounded ſinner, under the load of guilt, that had a ſight of his loſt, undone, deplorable condition, coming to the Apoſtles, and ſpeaking after this manner, *Ye men of God, ye Servants of the Lord, if there be any way for me, who have been ſo great a ſinner, that have done enough ten thouſand times over, to damn my own ſoul; if there be any certain way to avoid Damnation, I beſeech you tell me; if there be any means by which I might be certainly ſaved, as you pity my ſinful ſoul, my bleeding heart, my wounded conſcience, tell me what it is, declare it to me.* What is the Apoſtles anſwer? *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* The Apoſtle ſpeaks not doubtingly, *perhaps* thou ſhalt be ſaved, perhaps thou mayeſt be damned. If thou get Faith, *it may be* thou mayeſt get Heaven. Alas! what relief, peace, ſatisfaction would this have been to his wounded Conſcience? But they ſpeak *peremptorily, Believe and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* So that prove thou, that thou haſt Faith, and theſe Scriptures prove thou ſhalt have ſalvation.

The Connexion therefore will not be queſtioned, if I believe I ſhall be ſaved; this God hath promiſed: but ſhall not a believer loſe his Faith in Chriſt, and loſe his Love to God? for the Remonſtrants grant that a believer *qua talis*, as a believer cannot fall away, nor come ſhort of glory; but *qui talis eſt*; He that is a believer, may fall away totally and finally, and ſo cannot have aſſurance of ſalvation, becauſe

becauſe he hath no aſſurance that he ſhall perſevere in his believing and ſtate of Grace. To this I oppoſe theſe places of Scripture, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23, 24, *And the very God of peace ſanctifie you wholly*; and I pray *God your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body, be preſerved blameleſs*, (therefore preſerved from Apoſtacy, which is exceedingly blame-worthy) till when? *till the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; is this a prayer, and not a promiſe? Yea, it is a prayer indited by the ſpirit of God, and hath a promiſe following it, if you will read on. *Faithful is he that calleth you, who alſo will do it.* Here the Apoſtle that had the ſpirit, prayeth for perſeverance; and the Apoſtle that had the ſpirit, promiſeth perſeverance. Certainly then if perſeverance doth not make men careleſs in the uſe of means, nor prayers needleſs; by praying a man obtains the thing promiſed; and the certainty that he hath by the promiſe of obtaining, puts life into his prayers, *Phil.* 1. 6, *Being Confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it* ἐπιτελέσει, will finiſh it, will perfect it), *until the day of Jeſus Chriſt.* 1 Pet. 1. 5, *Kept* (garriſoned) *by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation*, John 10. 28, 30. 1 Cor. 10. 13. ——*But will with the temptation make a way to eſcape*; therefore they ſhall perſevere: for to enable the believer to perſevere in all temptations, is to make a way to eſcape the deſtruction and hurt, the temptation tendeth to. God doth promiſe this abſolutely, *Jer.* 32. 38, 40, *And they ſhall be my people, and I will be their God, and will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear into their hearts, that they ſhall not depart from me.* They ſhall not forſake God, becauſe God will not leave them, *Ezek.* 36. 27, *And I will put my ſpirit into you, and* [*cauſe*] *you to walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep my judgments, and do them.* As abſolute as was the *Covenant* with *Noah*, that he would not drown the world, *Iſa.* 54. 9. 10. Beſides, as God doth make conditional promiſes of pardon and ſalvation to thoſe that believe and repent, ſo he doth promiſe to give the condition, *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27. And herein is one ſpecial difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace; for God promiſed happineſs to man under the Covenant of Works, if he perſevered in yielding perfect obedience, but did not promiſe to keep him from departing from him. So that a conditional promiſe is ſufficient ſecurity, where the condition is certain; and doth not infer the uncertainty of the promiſe, but where the condition is doubtful. Theſe places alſo prove the conſtancy of Grace, that it ſhall not be loſt, 1 *John* 3. 9, *Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin*; doth not make a trade of ſin, cannot ſin ſo, as by ſin totally and finally to fall, *for his ſeed remaineth in him.* Whileſt the *Papiſts* and *Arminians* have endeavoured to bite aſunder the Golden chain whereby Grace and Glory are linked together; *This place of Scripture* hath broke their teeth. *Bellarmine* acknowledgeth, that this is the hardeſt place of Scripture for him to anſwer, in all the Book of God, *Joh.* 4. 14. It is ſet forth by a well of water ſpring-

φρουρεμένους· φρουρᾶσθαι denoteth more ſafety than φλυάρησθαι.

ἁμαρτίαν ποιεῖν differt ab ἁμαρτάνειν. Simpliciter accepto.

Bellar. Tom. 4. de Juſtif. lib. 3. cap. 15.

ing up to everlasting life. A believer is born of incorruptible seed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. An hypocrite, like a stake, hath no root, and therefore may be plucked up; but a real believer hath grace rooted in him, and therefore like a tree rooted in the earth, stands fast.

If it be objected, no man can certainly be assured of salvation, because God hath no where made a particular promise to any person, by name, and nothing is to be believed with a Divine faith, but what is expressly contained in the Word of God. He hath not said, *Thou Cornelius shalt be saved.*

To this is answered, *That all particulars are contained under the Universals.* If all men be rational creatures, and *Cornelius* be a man, we must conclude that *Cornelius* is a rational creature. How will they prove that there is an infallible certainty, that every particular person shall come to judgment: For God hath not said, and thou *Cornelius shalt come to judgment?* In the commands that are given to all men, that they shall not commit Adultery, How will they prove that this reaches every particular man? for where hath God said, *Thou Cornelius shalt not commit adultery?* Thus this is proved from the infallibility of Gods promises.

2 From the prevalency of Christs prayers.

Secondly, *The prevalency of Christs intercession for those that do believe and love God, doth demonstrate the inseparable connexion between Grace and Glory.* For we know that what Christ prayeth for, shall be granted, *John* 11. 42. *And I know that thou hearest me always.* * *Arminius* layeth it down as a certain truth, that Christs prayers are never rejected. Now Christs prayers for believers are not conditional, *Father, if their Faith fail not, let them be saved*; but Christ prayeth, *that their Faith might not fail, and that they may be saved.* Christs Intercession doth not exclude the conditions of Faith, and Perseverance; but is, that we may believe, persevere, and so infallibly be saved, *Luke* 22. 32. *I have prayed that thy Faith fail not.* And *Arminians* grant this prayer of Christ to be absolute, praying not for *Peters* salvation, if he should persevere, but praying that he may persevere. Neither is this prayer peculiar for *Peter*, excluding the rest; for though he mentioneth *Peter*, yet he speaketh to all, and of them all; *Simon, Simon*, Satan hath desired *you*, that he may sift *you* as Wheat; and when he should be recovered from his fall, he should strengthen his Brethren; whereby it is manifest, that Christ had respect unto the perseverance of the rest, as well as to *Peters*: And the like intercession Christ makes for all that should believe, as appeareth from the 17th of *John*, which was not a prayer only suitable to the condition, and cases, and exigencies of the Apostles at that time, but a pattern of his interceding now in Heaven. So much * *Arminius* grants, *John* 17 15, *I pray that thou wouldest keep them from evil*; therefore from Apostacy the greatest evil. Not that they should be free from persecution, but from being overcome by persecution, that it may not separate them from him: ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ; the Article shews the evil to be spe-

* *Certo certius concludere nobis licet, Christi preces nunquam rejectum iri. Armin. orat de sacer. Christi, p.* 17.

ἐξητήσατο ὑμᾶς.

* *Continet illud caput* 17 *Joh. perpetuum canonem precum & intercessionis, quas Christus patri offert in cælis quandiu enim Christus ad huc in terra existens illam precationem recitaverit, tamen ad statum illius sublimem in cælis pertinet proprie, & describi voluit, ut perpetuo nobis esset in terris solatio. Armin. orat. de Sacerd. Christi.* pag. 17.

cially

cially Sin and Satan, *verſe* 20. *Neither pray I for theſe alone: but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word*; And he prayeth for their Glorification, *verſe* 24. *Father, I will, that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am* (Chriſt then, as to his Divine nature, was in Heaven, a proof that he was God) *that they may behold my glory which thou haſt given me.*

Thirdly, *The inability of all things that may ſet themſelves to make a breach and ſeparation between God and the gracious ſoul, doth demonſtrate an inſeparable connection between grace and glory.* Famous is that place to this purpoſe, in *Rom.* 8. 35,37,38. Where the queſtion is propounded by the Apoſtle, whether any thing ſhall ſeparate betwixt God and his People, and hinder their Salvation? And the Apoſtle ſaith No: where, obſerve theſe particulars:

3 From the inability of all things to ſeparate betwixt Chriſt and a Believer.

Firſt, The Interrogation; Who ſhall ſeparate? That is, none ſhall. For thus an Interrogation, is a ſtrong Negation. *p.*

Interrogatio negantis.

Secondly, Here is a particular application of this, to individual perſons; not only Believers, or Elect in general. Who ſhall ſeparate [us]?

p Mat. 23 33. Heb. 2. 3.

Thirdly, A particular enumeration of thoſe evils that might threaten this ſeparation, tribulation, perſecution, *&c.* And whereas ſome aſſert their own wills may be the cauſe of their Apoſtacy, and that not mentioned in the Text. It is not ſaid their own wills ſhall not ſeparate them. I anſwer, it is included, when it is ſaid, no other creature, except they will exempt mens will from the creation.

Fourthly, His glorying and triumphing over all theſe, ὑπερνικῶμεν, more than Conquerors. *Over-overcome.*

Fifthly, In whoſe ſtrength it is, that we are enabled to keep our ſtedfaſtneſs, that maketh it the more certain in the ſtrength of Chriſt, and not our own.

Sixthly, His confidence, and he had the Spirit of God, πέπεισμαι, *I am perſwaded*, though ſometimes it ſignifies no more than a moral perſwaſion, or probable conjecture, yet it doth not exclude a certainty of knowledg, *Rom.* 14. 14, *I know, and am perſwaded by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that there is nothing unclean of it ſelf*; That is, I certainly know, it muſt therefore be judged by the circumſtances of the Text.

Seventhly, It is not ſaid only, they *ſhall not ſeperate*, but that they *cannot* ſeparate us from the love of God; whether love be taken actively or paſſively, for the love wherewith we love God, or the love wherewith we are beloved by God, is not now material; it is true of both. The ſum of this might be gathered up in this Syllogiſm. Thoſe that may certainly know, that they do ſincerely believe and love God, may certainly know that they ſhall be ſaved; but a real believer may certainly know, that he doth ſincerely believe and love God; therefore he may certainly know that he ſhall be ſaved.

Thus far of the firſt Argument from our Graces, and the infallible connexion between them and glory: becauſe I may be judged to be too long in this, I will be ſhorter in the reſt, that I may come to the ſecond part of the Queſtion.

2. *A Believer may know that he ſhall be ſaved, becauſe he may know he hath*

2. Argument from the inhabitation of the spirit.

hath the spirit of God dwelling in him. The in-dwelling of the spirit is proper and peculiar to believers; for the world cannot receive him, *John* 14. 17. That they have the spirit, they may know by the special effects which he produceth in that heart where he dwells, by his convincing, humbling, sanctifying work, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. By inabling them to make progress in their sanctification, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. By his special assistance vouchsafed to them in holy prayer, with sighs and groans which cannot be uttered, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. By inabling them to mortifie their sins more and more, *Rom.* 8. 13.

Now by all these effects, the in-dwelling of the Spirit of God in the heart of a Believer being manifested, it doth assure him of three things.

First, By the inhabitation of the spirit, he may know his eternal Election, 2 *Thes.* 2. 13. *Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit.*

Secondly, By this we may be sure of our Adoption, *Gal.* 4. 6. *And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father.*

Thirdly, By the spirit dwelling in us, we may be sure of Eternal salvation, *Ephes.* 1. 13, 14, *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.* In which Text there are two Words that are to be considered; the Spirit is a seal, it is an earnest; a seal among men, is, 1. For *Secrecy*, 2. For *Distinction*, 3. For *Authority*, 4. For *Certainty*. A writing sealed is authentick, and for ensuring. It is an earnest, so also called, 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. a Metaphor taken from buyers and sellers. An earnest among men, is part of payment; and though it be but small, yet it is sufficient to secure you of that which is of very great value. Though there be no commutative Justice betwixt God and the Creature, yet here it hath its weight. There is this difference betwixt an earnest and a pawn; A pawn might be fetcht from his hands to whom it was committed to keep; but an earnest binds a man to stand to his agreement, or at least he must lose his earnest: But God will give the whole inheritance, and will not lose his earnest. For our greater comfort, we may take notice of these particulars in this Text, and the 2 *Cor.* 1. 21, 22, compared together. 1. The person sealing, the *Father*. 2. In whom, in *Christ*. 3. With what seal, the *spirit* of Promise; where are all the persons in the Trinity, making us sure of our inheritance. 4. When? after ye believed. 5. The end subordinate, the certainty of our salvation, a seal, an earnest: ultimate, the praise of his glory. 6. *How long* this seal and earnest shall thus assure us? and that is, till we have the compleat possession of what it is an earnest.

ἐσφραγίσθητε, ἀῤῥαβών.

ἀῤῥαβών, *Peculiariter dicitur pars aliqua persoluta pretii in vendi-tione interve-nientis, ut fides fiat reliquæ persolvendæ summæ. Beza.*

3. Argument from instances. *ab esse ad posse valet consequentia.*

3. *Many have without extraordinary revelation obtained a certain knowledg, that they should be saved*; Therefore it is possible: That which hath been done, is not impossible, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight,*

fight, I have finiſhed my courſe; henceforth there is a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the Righteous Judg will give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his appearing. This certainty the Apoſtle gathers from his ſincerity and conſtancy in his Obedience and Faith, and declareth the ſame certainty all thoſe have, that know they love his appearing, *Heb.* 10. 34, *Knowing in your ſelves, that ye have in Heaven a better and enduring ſubſtance. Par parium ſtratio, & par affirmatio.*

4. *God commands us to make our calling and election ſure, therefore it is poſſible*; Gods commands are not evidences of our ability, but yet are of the poſſibility of the duty that he commands; they do not tell us what we by our own ſtrength can do, but yet they declare what by our diligence, and Gods aſſiſtance, may be done, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. And if we can make our election ſure (not in it ſelf, for ſo it is, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19, but to our ſelves) we may be ſure of ſalvation, *Rom.* 8. 30. *Whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called: and whom he called, them he alſo juſtified: and whom he juſtified, them he alſo glorified.* 4. Argument; *Nemo tenetur ad impoſſibile.*

5. *The Papiſts grant a certainty of hope, therefore we may have a certainty of Faith*; for by Faith we muſt firſt apprehend the object, before we can hope for it; and according to the meaſure, degrees, and ſtrength of our Faith, is our hope; he that hath but a weak faith, cannot have a ſtrong hope. If *Abraham* had ſtaggered in his faith, he had not been ſtedfaſt in his hope. *Rom.* 15. 13, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope.* So much for the poſſibility of this aſſurance. 5 Argument, πληροφορια τῆς ἐλπιδος. *Heb.* 6. 11, ſuppoſeth, πληροφοριαν τῆς πιστεως. *Heb.* 10. 12.

Now I come to the ſecond part of the queſtion, to ſpeak to thoſe that know not that they have eternal life, and diſcern not their ſpiritual condition, and thoſe may be of two ſorts. Second part of the Caſe.

1. Some that *for want of diligence in the uſe of means*, are uncertain what their condition is.

2. Such as have made enquiry, and long earneſtly to be reſolved in this great Queſtion, whether they be Converted, Changed, and ſhall be ſaved, or no, and yet cannot find it out. I would ſpeak a few things to the firſt of theſe, becauſe the greateſt part know not their condition, through their own careleſsneſs and negligence, that through the *ſloathfulneſs* of their own hearts, or the *difficulty* of the work, or *multiplicity* of worldly care and buſineſs, are yet in the dark. That examine their Shop-book oftner, and more diligently, than they do the book of their own hearts; that make oftner enquiry whether they grow rich, than whether they wax good. If I may judg of other mens hearts by mine own, in this point, and not be thought to have too hard and uncharitable thoughts of them; I would conclude we are all guilty of negligence in this caſe, and therefore walk in the dark, and remain in uncertainties about the ſalvation of our immortal ſouls, which ſhould be the firſt thing we ſhould make ſure of, becauſe it is of the greateſt and everlaſting concernment. Ah Chriſtian, chide thy own ſloathful, lazy, negligent heart; ſhame thy ſelf out of this care-

careleſsneſs; what canſt thou eat and drink, and ſleep, and trade as quietly, as if thou wert paſt all danger? And yet thou doſt not know whether thou ſhalt be damned or ſaved. Awake, oh my ſoul! Rouſe up thy ſelf, and look after thine eternal ſtate; it is no matter whether thou art rich or poor, honourable or contemptible; the great queſtion, that with the greateſt ſeriouſneſs is to be reſolved, is, whether thou haſt grace or no, whether Chriſt be thine or no; certainly careleſs perſons ſhould be ſtirred up to look after their eternal ſtate; and thoſe that are diligent, need ſome conſiderations to make them more diligent: and therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* writeth to thoſe that had obtained like precious faith with himſelf, calling upon them, urging and exhorting them to make their calling and election ſure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. For this end, let me propound theſe following queſtions to thee, that art negligent in this great concernment, and as thou readeſt, give thy ſelf a ſober ſerious anſwer.

8 Queſtions propounded to ſloathful Chriſtians.

1. Is it nothing to thee to live in the daily neglect of a commanded duty? is it not the injunction of thy Lord, whoſe ſervant thou doſt profeſs thy ſelf to be, that thou ſhouldeſt give all diligence in this matter, and wilt thou not give any at all; or not at all proportionable to the weightineſs of thy concernment herein? might not this raiſe doubts and jealouſies in thy ſoul, that thy condition is not good, becauſe thou art not diligent to know, and to prove it to be good? eſpecially when thou doſt conſider that thy Lord commands thy diligence herein: Mighteſt not thou queſtion the ſincerity of thy obedience to any of Gods Commands, for want of the univerſality of it, extending it ſelf to all Gods Commands? Tell me, Chriſtian, why hath God given us this charge? Read 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, *Wherefore, the rather Brethren, give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; is it not the ſame God that commands thee to pray, that commands thee to make ſure of Heaven? didſt thou never read theſe words? or haſt thou read them, and thrown them by, and thought this counſel is not fit to be followed, nor this command to be obeyed? What canſt thou ſay for thy neglect? Look a little into the Text, what is it that you are commanded to make ſure of? Houſe or Land? If it had been ſo, it is like thou wouldeſt have obeyed; but it is ſomething better, infinitely better, whether thou art effectually called, and eternally elected; and is this to be done ſloathfully, careleſly; or doth not God require thy diligence, thy utmoſt diligence, nay all thy diligence, nay thy ſpeedy diligence without delay, thy painful diligence, without indulging thy ſelf in thy ſloth; thy continual diligence without wearineſs, or till thou hadſt got a certainty of thy ſtate? and ſhouldeſt thou not do this, *rather* than any temporal concernment? ſhouldeſt not thou make ſure of grace, *rather* than of riches; of Heaven, *rather* than the Earth; of an intereſt in God, *rather* than of earthly poſſeſſions.

Σπουδάζετε.

2. Is it not a ſhame that wicked men ſhould daily uſe more care to make ſure of fading vanities, than thou doſt to make ſure of better, and

and more laſting riches? what, is not the ſoul better than the body? or are things temporal better worth than things Eternal? how do they cark and care, what muſt we eat, and what muſt we drink; and how ſhall we be ſure of ſomething to keep us when we are old? Doſt thou do thus for thy ſoul, how ſhall I get my ſins pardoned, my nature ſanctified, and my ſoul ſaved? how ſhall I be ſure of an eternal heavenly houſe above, when this mouldring cottage of my body is tumbled down? doth it not ſhame thee to ſee the diligence of worldly men, that if they buy houſe, or land, they look narrowly to the writing, and ask advice, and counſel, whether the Title will be good, that they may be ſure, and not defrauded? The old Uſurer will not let forth his monies, but he will have good ſufficient ſecurity, both for Principal and Intereſt, becauſe he ſaith, and knows it is good to be ſure; nay, yet farther, doth it not ſhame thee, that many men ſhould take more pains for Hell, than thou doſt for Heaven; and to be ſure of damnation, than thou doſt to be certain of thy ſalvation? how do they daily drudg in the ways of wickedneſs, committing ſin with greedineſs, with both hands, heartily, with their whole ſoul, as though they ſhould not come to Hell ſure enough, or ſoon enough; while thou art dull, flat, liſtleſs in thy duties to God, and not praying heartily as for thy ſoul: Do not wicked men take more pains in breaking the Sabbath, than thou doſt in keeping of it? and do not they ſcorn duties, more than thou doſt prize and practiſe them? But further, *Operoſe nihil agunt.*

3. Doſt thou not too much forget thine own Mortality? doſt thou indeed conſider, that thou art haſting into an Eternal ſtate, and muſt within theſe few years, months, yea weeks, enter into an unchangeable condition? doſt thou indeed believe Heaven or Hell is before thee? that eternal death, or eternal life, are at the end of this fading, ſhort, momentany life? or doſt thou judg it to be indifferent, whether it be the place of thy everlaſting abode? what is the matter? Good Lord! what ſloath, ſtupidity, negligence, hath poſſeſſed our hearts! ſurely, if thou didſt believe that thou mighteſt be in thy Grave to morrow, wouldſt thou not make ſure of Heaven to day? if the leaſe of thy houſe be almoſt expired, and the Landlord hath given thee warning to provide thee another habitation, for he will not ſuffer thee to renew it any more, doſt thou not preſently enquire of thy friends, and of thy neighbours; Sirs, can you tell me where I may have a convenient dwelling, I have but a little time in the houſe where I am, and I have had warning to go out by ſuch a day? Art thou not careful to have an houſe ready to go to upon the very ſame day thou leaveſt the former? Alas! *man*, doſt not thou know the leaſe of thy life is almoſt out? Nay, doſt thou not know that thou art only a Tenant at will, and God may turn thee out at an hours, at a moments warning? and yet, doſt thou not make ſure of an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens? hath not God given thee warning? did thy head never ake? was thy heart never ſick? ſurely, if thou didſt not forget thy own mortality, thou wouldſt be more careful, painful, diligent in thy buſineſs. I ſee

frequently men upon their ſick-beds, when they think they *muſt* dye, begin to enquire after heaven, and how they may know their ſins are pardoned, and whether their ſouls ſhall be ſaved; becauſe the apprehenſion of the neerneſs of the grave doth rouze them; and for all thou knoweſt, thou, though now in health, mayeſt be as ſoon in thy grave, as he that lyeth ſick. God can ſtop thy breath when he pleaſeth. Art thou mortal? look then after thy ſoul.

4. Is not this too great a ſleighting of the comforts of the ſpirit of God, of Chriſt and happineſs? is there not ſo much excellency in all theſe, and ſweetneſs in diſcerning thy propriety in them, as to provoke thee to diligence, in making ſure of them?

5. Doſt not thou know that others have loo'ed long after it? and doſt thou think thou ſhalt come ſo eaſily to it? others have prayed much, and ſearched themſelves often, and yet have not been able to ſatisfie all their own doubts, whether they have gone farther than ever any Hypocrite went? and doſt thou think it will be ſo eaſily diſcerned, whether thy heart be ſincere with God? many find it a hard thing to diſtinguiſh betwixt the higheſt degrees of common grace in Hypocrites, and the loweſt degrees of ſaving grace in a true Believer.

6. Doſt thou think that Conſcience will never be awakened to diſquiet thee, when thou canſt not ſatisfie it about thy ſalvation? will it always be in this ſpiritual ſlumber? doſt thou think that ſickneſs will never come? and that death will never come? and that trouble will never ſeize upon thee? when thy Conſcience ſhall be ſo alarmed, that thou wouldeſt give all thou art worth, to know what ſhall become of thy ſoul? Oh then, for an infallible evidence of Gods love! Oh then, that thou mighteſt know whether God will pardon thy ſin, and ſave thy ſoul! Oh dreadful caſe! when thou comeſt to dye, and Conſcience ſhall accuſe thee for thy ſloath, when thou feeleſt thy ſpirit begin to fail, and apprehendeſt thy ſelf near the grave, and Conſcience rageth, and is not at peace, becauſe thou doſt not know whether thou ſhalt go, to Heaven or Hell. It is dreadful, doleful, ſad, to hear theſe complaints from a dying man: Oh wo is me, that I muſt take my farewel of all my friends, and death is impatient of delay, and yet I cannot ſay my ſins are pardoned! Oh, wo is me, though I lye a dying, I cannot ſay my ſins are pardoned! within a little while my body muſt be carried from my Bed to my Grave; but oh, it breaks my heart, that I cannot tell whether my ſoul, my precious (and yet too much neglected) ſoul ſhall be carried to Heaven by holy Angels, or dragged down to Hell by curſed Devils! Oh that God would grant me a month or two, a little longer, that I may work out my ſalvation! But thy Conſcience ſhall tell thee, thou hadſt time, but thou didſt miſ-ſpend it; thou hadſt it, but thou didſt not improve it in getting this grand queſtion reſolved, Whether thou hadſt made thy peace with God. Conſider now how dreadful it will be, when Conſcience is awakened, and thou in this caſe unreſolved.

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7. If thou be a true Chriſtian, yet herein doſt thou not act too much like the careleſs ungodly World? they take no care to make ſure of Heaven, and wilt thou juſtifie their practice, and hearden them in it? There are ſome carnal ones in the family; a carnal husband, or a carnal wife, or ungodly children, or graceleſs ſervants, that mind not God, nor care for their ſouls, that look not after Heaven; and wilt thou be guilty of incouraging them in their careleſneſs, and hardening them in their forgetfulneſs of God, by thine own remiſsneſs? But if thou waſt ſerious in the uſe of means, preſſing, following hard after God, thy ſtrictneſs might ſhame them out of their wickedneſs, and might reflect upon themſelves, If ſuch a one that lives ſo circumſpectly, and taketh ſo much pains in duties, and yet doubteth, and fears, and would fain be reſolved; what a careleſs wretch am I, never to regard my own ſoul? they are ignorant of God and his excellency, of Chriſt and his beauty, of Grace and its neceſſity: and therefore deſire them not, nor care to make ſure of them; but God hath opened thine eyes to ſee all theſe. Stir up thy ſelf then to get a certainty of thine intereſt in them.

8. Art thou not too much guilty of Hypocriſie when thou goeſt to the Table of the Lord, and yet doſt not give diligence to make thy calling and election ſure; nor to have the certain knowledg of the pardon of thy ſin, and of thy peace with God? is not the Lords Supper an ordinance for the helping the right receivers to aſſurance of the pardon of their ſin in the blood of Chriſt? is it not for that end a ſeal of the Covenant of grace; if thou ſayeſt, thou uſeſt it for this end, why then, doſt thou look after it no more, when thou returneſt from that Ordinance?

Having premiſed theſe things to awaken you, and rouze you out of your ſloath, ſuppoſing that now you are reſolved to take any courſe that can be preſcribed from the Word of God: That thou art one, who weepeſt, mourneſt, complaineſt, becauſe thou doſt not diſcern thy ſpiritual condition: I ſhall lay down my advice to thee in theſe following Directions.

1. *Direction.*

Directions to get aſſurance.

1. *Get ſome Characteriſtical diſtinguiſhing ſigns of true ſaving grace, by thy ſerious ſearching the Word of God.* God hath told thee in his Word, who ſhall be damned, and who ſhall be ſaved; though not by name, yet by the qualifications by which they are deſcribed. In the Bible there are the Statute Laws of Heaven, and the ſtanding Rule by which thou muſt be tryed, thou muſt ſtand or fall, be eternally bleſſed, or everlaſtingly miſerable; as thy condition is conſonant to, or various from the infallible Characters of ſaving Grace contained in the Scripture. Thou that haſt deſerved eternal death, mighteſt know before the day of the general Aſſize, whether thou ſhalt be acquitted or condemned.

But if thou know not how to gather theſe thy ſelf, go to ſome godly faithful Miniſter, and deſire him to give thee ſome Characters of a ſin-

cere Chriſtian from the Word of God, wherein hypocriſie and ſincerity are differenced, and be ſure the ſigns thou tryeſt thy ſelf by, be not ſhort of ſaving grace, or that will not hold tryal, or bear thee out at the day of judgment. I cannot here inſert any; partly, becauſe I have not room to croud them in; partly, becauſe, by what I have already laid down under that head, That a man might know that he is ſincere, believeth and loveth God, ſomething to this purpoſe might be picked up.

2. *Direction.*

2. When thou haſt thus furniſhed thy ſelf, thy next work muſt be *to ſet thy Conſcience on work, and reflect upon thy own heart, and upon the motions of thy will, and compare thy ſelf with the Word of God.* The former ſent you to ſtudy the book of Gods Word, this calleth upon you to ſtudy the book of your own hearts. The other is a direct act of the underſtanding, this is a reflect act to make a judgment of thy ſtate, whether there be a Tranſcript of thoſe things in thine own heart: for every Believer hath the Goſpel-laws written upon the table of his ſoul by the Spirit of God. Aſſurance cannot be had ordinarily, without the examination of our own Hearts: for aſſurance is the certain knowledg of the concluſion drawn from the premiſes, one out of the Scripture, the other by the reflect act of the underſtanding, or Conſcience, thus: He that believeth, and is juſtified, ſhall be ſaved; that is the Word of God: Then by the ſearch of his own heart, he muſt be able to ſay; But I believe and am juſtified: and from theſe two, doth reſult this aſſurance, that he may conclude: Therefore I ſhall be ſaved. *Luke* 15.8, The woman that had loſt a piece of ſilver, did light a Candle, and ſwept her houſe, and thereby found what ſhe had loſt. Conſcience is this Candle, the Scripture is the fire at which it muſt be lighted, and ſelf-examination is the broom whereby the heart is ſwept, and ſo the ſtate of the ſoul, which before was not diſcerned, comes to be diſcovered.

But here take heed thy heart be not raſh in affirming or denying; ſuſpend the determination till thou haſt made a narrow, ſtrict inquiry into thy ſoul; as thou loveſt thy ſoul, do not *preſume*; as thou valueſt thy comfort, do not deny any work of the Spirit of God upon thy heart, but with thankfulneſs acknowledg any thing that thou canſt diſcern to be a fruit of the ſpirit. *Search throughly, and judg impartially.* Say therefore to thy ſoul, to make thy ſelf more ſerious in this weighty work; Thou art now, oh my ſoul, in the preſence of the great Heart-ſearching God, that knoweth certainly what thy ſtate and condition is, what thy will, heart, and affections are: thou muſt, oh my ſoul! ſhortly ſtand at the Bar of God, as now thou ſtandeſt at the Bar of Conſcience, and muſt be ſearched, judged by the Lord, and have the ſentence of Life or Death, of abſolution or condemnation, according as thy ſtate ſhall be found to be. Conſider, oh my ſoul, thou art now about the greateſt concernment in the world: many have been miſtaken, many are now tormented in Hell, that once thought their condition was good; it is not therefore for thee to flatter thy ſelf, and

Deus eſt oculus infinitus.

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it is eaſie to be miſtaken: and if thou ſhouldeſt be miſtaken, it is as much as thy ſoul is worth: if thy condition be bad, and thou conclude it to be good, thou wilt but go more merrily to Hell: It is as much as thy comfort is worth, if thy condition be good, and thou conclude it to be bad, thou wilt go more ſadly to Heaven, and wilt be unthankful to thy God, and keep the glory from him, and the comfort from thy ſelf. Thou art indited, oh my ſoul! arraigned and found guilty, that thou haſt ſinned againſt the Lord: the queſtion is, Whether thou haſt repented, and art pardoned? I charge thee therefore, oh my ſoul! that thou ſpeak truly, and anſwer rightly to theſe demands.

Art thou ſo far convinced of ſin, of the vileneſs of its own Nature, the evil in it, the evil after it, that thou art weary of it, thou groaneſt under it, thou loatheſt it, and art unfeignedly willing to be broken from every ſin, without any reſerve? and what thou canſt not extirpate, that thou wilt bewail? Art thou ſo far convinced of thine own inſufficiency to help thy ſelf, that all thy tears cannot waſh thee, and make thee clean; all thy duties cannot ſave thee: that though thou dareſt not neglect them as means, yet thou dareſt not rely upon them as a Saviour; ſo that thou ſeeſt the neceſſity of a Chriſt, the ſuitableneſs of Chriſt, the ſufficiency and willingneſs of Chriſt, offering himſelf unto thee in the Goſpel, calling to thee, crying after thee, ſaying, Ah thou *poor, miſerable, forlorn ſinner*, thou haſt undone thy ſelf, wilt thou now be cured? thou haſt wounded thy ſelf, wilt thou let me apply a plaiſter of my blood, my healing, pacifying blood, to thy bleeding ſoul, to thy diſtreſſed, diſquieted Conſcience? all that I expect from thee, is to take me for thy Lord and Husband, to rule, govern, ſanctifie, and ſave thee: thou haſt withſtood thine own mercy: I have often asked thee, and thou haſt often denied me; but yet if now thou wilt receive me, behold, I bring pardon along with me, and peace along with me, and eternal life, and every good thing along with me; yet mercy is not gone, it is not yet denied to thee. When thou mayeſt gather ſuch things from the Word of Chriſt, put the queſtion to thy ſelf, What ſayeſt thou, oh my *ſoul*? thou heareſt the gracious words of the Lord Jeſus, he commands thee to come, he inviteth thee to come, he promiſeth thee acceptance if thou come; art thou willing, or art thou not? wilt thou perſevere in thy former denial, and be damned, or wilt thou yield, and be ſaved? wilt thou conſent to take him for thy husband, and ſubſcribe unto his terms? doth thy judgment value him above all? and thy will chuſe him above all? and thy affections go out after him above all things in the world, as a woman doth in all thoſe three reſpects, when ſhe taketh a man to be her husband?

Art thou ſo far convinced of the excellency of the everlaſting glory of the Saints, and the perfection of that happineſs that is above, as it is a ſtate of perfect *Holineſs*, as well as a ſtate of real *Happineſs*; that thou art willing to part with any thing that might hinder thee from obtaining of it; and do any duty preſcribed by God, though diſpleaſing to thy fleſh, and uſe them as means for the attaining of ſo excellent an end? wouldſt

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thou have him whatever it coſt thee? canſt thou not be without him, whatever thou be without? then paſs ſentence for thy ſelf, concluding thy condition to be happy.

This is the neareſt way to find out thy condition, not ſtand wrangling with thy ſelf for thy former neglects, any further than for thy humiliation; and do not ſo much enquire what thou haſt not formerly done, as what now thou art really willing to do.

Beſides, this ſolemn, ſet-examination, thou ſhalt find it very profitable to get and keep a ſight of thy ſpiritual condition, to call thy ſelf to an account every night before thou ſleep, where thou haſt been that day, what thou haſt done, what company thou haſt been in, what ſin thon haſt committed, what duty thou haſt omitted: and mourn if thou haſt fallen, and return thy hearty thanks to God, if thou haſt walked careſully and circumſpectly that day; this counſel a Noble Heathen did give, to call our ſelves to an account before we ſleep.

Πῆ παρέβην τί δὲ ἔρεξα, τί μοὶ θεον οὐκ ἐτελέθη: *Pythag. Carm.*

3. *Direction.*

3. That thy aſſurance may be yet more compleat and full, and thy comfort ariſing from the ſame more enlarged; *Fall down at the Throne of Grace, and beg earneſtly, and pray importunately for the witneſs of the Spirit of God.* For as it is the Spirit that worketh grace in us, ſo it is the Spirit that muſt diſcover the truth of that Grace to us, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12, *Now we have received, not the Spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.* Rom. 8. 16, *The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God.* But beware thou take not Satanical deluſions for the ſpirits perſwaſion; or the conceit of thy own Brain, for the witneſs of the Spirit. The Spirit never witneſſeth any thing to any man, contrary to what is revealed in the Word, for he is a Spirit of Truth, and never ſpeaks contradictions; therefore if any man thinketh that he hath the witneſs of the Spirit, teſtifying that he is a child of God, and yet is not holy, humble, penitent, he is deceived; but if thou haſt the Graces of the Spirit, and the Spirit witneſſeth ſo much unto thy Conſcience, and with thy Conſcience, 1. It inflameth thy heart with love to God and Chriſt. 2. It raiſeth more hatred in thee to thy ſin. 3. Thou findeſt a mighty ſtrength and power in it, ingaging thy ſoul to walk humbly, holily with thy God. 4. A wonderful cogency in it to be zealous for God, in ſuffering any thing for his ſake, and doing and obeying any thing that he enjoyns,—thou haſt encouragement to ask this of God, becauſe it is according to his will (*q*), *Joh.* 14. 21. Lord, is it not according to thy will, that I ſhould be careful of my immortal ſoul, and make ſure its eternal happineſs and ſalvation? it is thy command I ſhould do ſo, that I ſhould examine my ſelf whether I be in the Faith, and whether Chriſt be formed in my heart. Lord, I have examined, but yet I cannot clearly ſee it. I ſee there is ſome grounds to hope it, but yet I cannot confidently aſſert it. Oh thou bleſſed Spirit of God, clear up mine underſtanding, and ſtir up and excite my Graces, that I may feel the

(*q*) Joh. 14. 13, 14.

the actings of them in my ſoul, and ſo better diſcern them. Though this be arbitrary and not neceſſary, yet do to me as thou didſt unto thy ſervant *David*, when he prayed that thou wouldeſt lift up upon him the light of thy countenance, thou putteſt gladneſs into his heart (*r*). r Pſal. 4. 6, 7.

4. *Direction.*

4. *Preſs after the higheſt degrees of Grace, and be much in the exerciſe thereof*, if thou wouldeſt clearly diſcern thy ſpiritual condition. The weakneſs of thy Grace makes thee doubt of the truth of Grace. The Chriſtian muſt be like the Crocodile, * that grows as long as it lives, and ceaſeth to be, when it ceaſeth to grow. The body of a man is continually growing, till he come to his perfect age, and then ceaſeth to grow: for then, though he may wax fat, and broader, yet he riſeth not higher, and his bones have no increaſe: So when we come to our full ſtature in Chriſt, to our perfect age in glory, we ſhall grow no more, becauſe then we ſhall be perfect; but in our minority we muſt be always growing, and a growing perſon is eaſily diſcerned to be a living perſon. A Dwarf cannot ſee ſo far as a taller man, nor be ſeen ſo far: So a little Grace cannot be ſo eaſily perceived amongſt a croud of ſins and corruption. * As ſome affirm.

When Grace at firſt is like *Elijahs* cloud, 1 *Kings* 18. 43, 44, little, like a mans hand, it was hardly diſcerned; but when it did increaſe, and the Heavens were black with Clouds, every eye could then perceive them. Aſſurance is uſually vouchſafed to Chriſtians of the largeſt ſize. Men put not up a great Maſt or Sail in a little Boat, but in a larger Veſſel, that is able to bear it.

So alſo by the ſtrong actings and exerciſe of Grace it is diſcerned. A man in his ſleep, when he acts not reaſon, cannot judg himſelf to be a man. A man in a ſwoon, when he cannot be perceived to breathe, ſtanders-by know not whether he be dead or alive, nor he himſelf. Moral habits are acquired and ſtrengthened by frequently repeated Acts, and more eaſily diſcerned. The fire lying raked under the aſhes, is not ſo eaſily found, as when it being blown up, breaketh forth into a flame. He that hath ſtrong love to God, will ſooner feel it; and the more frequent it moveth, and is upon the wing after God, the ſooner ſhalt thou know that thou loveſt him. The being of a thing is proved by its operation. *Operari ſupponit eſſe.* *Animi quies, motus virtutis eſt*, the moving activity of vertue, is the ſetled reſt of the mind.

Direct. 5. *Be well acquainted and informed in the nature of the Covenant of Grace, and the conditions thereof.* Whatſoever are thy doubts, there is ſomething in the Covenant of Grace that would be ground of ſatisfaction to thee; is it thine own unworthineſs? here rich and free Grace is laid open; is it thy long delay of coming unto God that now thou thinkeſt it is too late? the Goſpel will tell thee, that Chriſt will not caſt thee off, if now thou come unto him; is it thy ragged, torn, imperfect obedience? the Covenant of Grace accepts of ſincerity, though there be many infirmities; the intention of the heart, for the work of the hand; the purpoſe, for the performance; where

the

the ſincere ſoul cannot do ſo much as he doth really deſire to do.

Direct. 6. *Prize the ſociety of the people of God, that are acquainted with the workings of Gods ſpirit upon their hearts.* Be much in communion with the Saints. When they have been unfolding their doubts, they have been in ſome good meaſure reſolved; this hath quickened their hearts when they have been dull; and blown up the ſparks of love in their ſouls to God, that they have felt their hearts to burn within them (*s*) with love towards God.

(*s*) Luk. 24. 32. Pſal. 66. 16. Mal. 3. 16.

Direct. 7. *Keep a record of all the experiences thou haſt had of Gods goodneſs to thee, and what thou haſt formerly found* (*t*) *make it a means for the ſupporting of thy ſoul for the preſent, and the future.* Such a time thou canſt remember thou waſt upon thy knees, bemoaning thy ſelf, loathing thy ſelf, full of ſorrow and complaints, and God took thee up in the arms of his love, and ſpake like a friend, words of peace and comfort to thy ſoul, and bid thee be of good chear, he was reconciled to thy ſoul; he filled thee full of ſorrow, and afterwards filled thee full of joy; he caſt thee down, and raiſed thee up; he broke thy heart, and bound it up; he came to thee, as to *Mary*, expoſtulating with thee; ſinner, why weepeſt thou? what aileth thee? thou weepeſt for thy Saviour, and he was by thee, and ſhewed himſelf unto thee.

(*t*) Pſal. 77. 10, 11.

So much for the means to obtain this certain knowledg of eternal life; but if by the uſe of theſe and the like directions, the ſoul cannot get this aſſurance; and though he ſearch, and pray, and grieve, becauſe he hath not the light of God's countenance ſhining upon him, followeth the means, and longs to know his eſtate; and all things he enjoyeth, are leſſened in his eſteem, becauſe he cannot ſee his intereſt in Chriſt, whom he doth moſt eſteem. To thee I will give theſe directions.

Counſel to thoſe, that by theſe directions cannot yet obtain this aſſurance.

First, *Though thou canſt not ſay thy condition is good, yet do not ſay that thy condition is bad.* Though thou canſt not affirm thou haſt the faith of *Evidence*, yet do not peremptorily ſay, thou haſt not the faith of *Adherence*; though thou haſt not the witneſs of the ſpirit for thee, yet do not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy ſelf; canſt not thou ſay thou art ſure of Heaven? yet do not ſay there is no hope of Heaven; though thou canſt not own Heaven as thine, do not diſown it; if thou canſt not prove it, do not diſclaim it. It is ſtrange, yet ordinary, to ſee many doubting Chriſtians diſpute againſt themſelves, and reaſon againſt their own comfort; tell them of their longing after Chriſt, their weeping and mourning for him, they doubt it is not in truth: if you ſay to them, if you do not truly love him, then let him alone, and follow no more after him; why do you grieve for him, becauſe you cannot find him, if you do not truly love him? they will reply, Conſcience will put a man on to do ſomething, when yet it may not be done out of love to God; if you ask, can you take up with any thing ſhort of Chriſt; though indeed they cannot, yet they will reply, The heart is deceitful, and they know not what they ſhould do. *Frame not Arguments againſt thy*

thy ſelf, when thou canſt not frame them for thy ſelf; live by faith, when thou canſt not live by ſenſe and comfort.

Take heed here, of judging thy condition to be bad, by trying thy ſelf by rules, not ſo ſuitable to find out the being and truth of grace, as the growth and increaſe of grace. And here,

1. Say not, thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou haſt not ſo much as thou ſeeſt others to have; to take notice of the eminent degrees of Grace in others, to provoke our ſelves to labour after the ſame proportion, is good; but to argue for a nullity of Grace, becauſe thou haſt not ſuch a quantity of Grace as thou diſcerneſt in others, is not rational. Is there no water in the Brook, becauſe there is not ſo much as in the River? Is there not light in a candle, becauſe there is not ſo much as in the Sun? Wilt thou ſay thou art a Beggar, becauſe thou art not ſo rich as thy Neighbours, that have a full eſtate? Or, that thou knoweſt nothing, becauſe thou knoweſt not ſo much as the greateſt Scholar? Obſerve *Peter* in this caſe, *Joh.* 21. 17. he did not ſay when Chriſt asked him, *Loveſt thou me more than theſe*, I love thee *more* than *John*, or any of thy Diſciples love thee, *but, I love thee*; thou muſt love Chriſt more than thou loveſt any thing in the world beſides, or elſe thou doſt not ſincerely love him; but thou muſt not conclude, that, except thou loveſt him as much, or more than others love him, that thou haſt no love at all unto him: Yet this is ordinary, I never was humbled ſo much as others have been; I cannot mourn as others do. Enquire now after the *truth*, rather than after the *degrees*; and know thy humiliation is true, Firſt, when thou art broken for and from thy ſin: ſo much bitterneſs upon the breaſt, as weaneth the child from it, is ſufficient. Secondly, that makes thee ſee a neceſſity of Chriſt, and willing to cloſe ſincerely with him.

2. Say not, thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou haſt not grace proportionable to thy deſires; but, rather hope thou haſt it, becauſe thou haſt ſuch enlarged deſires after it; is not he a froward, unthankful child, that ſaith his Father hath given him nothing, becauſe not ſo much as he deſireth?

3. Say not, Thou haſt no Grace, becauſe thou ſeeſt corruption in thee more than before; they were in thy heart before, though thou didſt not diſcern them; the houſe is full of filth, but while the ſhuts are up, it is not perceived, but take them down, and you ſee it plainly, not becauſe there is more filth, but becauſe there is more light.

4. Not becauſe of the indiſpoſedneſs of thy heart to, and dulneſs of thy affections ſometimes in the time of holy duties.

Secondly, *When thou canſt not get aſſurance, make as much improvement of the grounds upon which thou mayeſt build* (u) *hopes of ſalvation.* The probable grounds thou haſt, thou wouldſt not part with for all the World; if thy heart is not full of joy through ſenſe of Gods love, yet thine eyes are full of tears, and thy ſoul of ſorrow, through the ſenſe of thy ſin; wouldſt thou change thy condition with any hypocrite whatſoever, with the richeſt man that hath no Grace? I would not have

u Pſal. 33. 18. & Pſal. 148. 11.

thee reſt ſatisfied with a probability, but yet bleſs God for a probability of ſalvation: Is it nothing, that one that hath deſerved hell moſt certainly, ſhould have a pobability that he ſhould eſcape it? would not this be a little eaſe to the torments of the damned, if they had but a ſtrong probability, that they may be ſaved? *but no hope makes it heavy:* when thou art ſick, thou enquireſt of the Phyſitian, Sir, what do you think of me? ſhall I live? or ſhall I dye? if he reply, it is not certain, but there is good hopes, it is probable you will live, and do well; this is ſome ſupport unto thee in thy ſickneſs.

Thirdly, *Diſcourſe with ſuch Chriſtians whom thou dareſt not judg to be ungodly, and yet findeſt them to be in the ſame condition with thy ſelf, having the ſame doubts, the ſame fears, complaining of the ſame ſin; and do not paſs a worſe judgment upon thy ſelf than thou dareſt upon them.* This is a very uſeful way, either to convince, or ſupport, to conſider our caſe in a third perſon. Thus *Nathan* convinced *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 1, to the 15. *ver.* So the Prophet convinced *Ahab*, 1 Kings 20. 35, to the end of the Chapter. A man condemning another in the ſame caſe, becomes αὐτοκατάκριτος, ſelf-condemned. So a man approving of another in the ſame ſtate and condition, cloathed with the ſame circumſtances, as himſelf, is to approve of himſelf; thou heareſt another ſay, he knows not what to think of his preſent and eternal ſtate; but yet thou ſeeſt, and he tells thee he dares not willingly ſin; the deſire of his ſoul is to walk holily and humbly with his God, he dare not neglect a commanded duty; thou dareſt not ſay, this man hath no grace; it being as well with thee, ſay not worſe of thy ſelf.

Fourthly, *Forſake not duty, becauſe thou wanteſt comfort*; Thou hadſt better want joy, than neglect duty; for duty is more neceſſary than comfort, and in order to it, therefore muſt be minded more; to ſeek comfort, may be in love to thy ſelf; but to be conſtant in duty in the want of comfort, argues conſcientious obedience to the commands of thy God. Though thou art not taken up into the arms of Chriſt, yet lie at his feet; though he doth not take thee into his boſom, yet throng among the croud to touch the hem of his garment. He might deny thee comfort, and yet own thee for his child; but thou canſt not deny him duty, and yet own him for thy God: if he do not tell thee thou art his Son, yet do not thou ſay, thou wilt not be his (*w*) Servant. I beſeech thee, ſay not, I will hear no more, I will pray no more, Ordinances are in vain, and all indeavours will be in vain. Caſting off hope, clips the wings of ſerious, conſtant endeavours. Limit not God to thy time. *Joſeph* did not preſently diſcover himſelf unto his Brethren, but carried himſelf as a ſtranger to them. *Joſeph* knew that they were his Brethren, but they knew not that they were related to him: but they often coming to him, and making known their perplexed condition in the grief and trouble of their ſouls, with ſad complaints and moans, he could no longer refrain, his heart was full, his bowels did yearn, and the fire of love did ſo flame forth, that made his tears preſently boyl over. I am *Joſeph* your Brother, I will ſhew you kind-

(*w*) Luk. 15. 19.

neſs,

neſs, be not troubled, *Gen.* 45. 1. and the following verſes. While thou followeſt God with thy complaints, and preſſeſt hard after Chriſt, he will at length ſhew, and make known himſelf unto thee. O thou weeping ſinner, I am Jeſus thy Brother, I am thy Redeemer, I will be thy Saviour; though thou haſt dealt unkindly with me, yet I will receive thee with the ſweet embracements of my everlaſting love. Read *Pſal.* 85. 8. *Hoſ.* 6. 1, 2, 3. *Iſa.* 54. 7, 8.

Fifthly, *Always be more obſervant of the purpoſe and diſpoſition of thy heart, the inclination of thy will, the general ſcope of thy life, than the paſſionate ſenſe of joy and comfort.* There is but little conſtancy in theſe joys; like the tide, they ebb and flow. Like a Land-flood, might overflow for a while, but a little after be dried up; joys are the *ſweet-meats* of the ſoul, but are not for its conſtant fare and diet. For a ſpiritual banquet, not for a ſtanding-diſh. Thus it was with *David.* And the experience of Chriſtians proves it.

Sixthly, *When thou canſt not experience the ſweetneſs of the Promiſe, yet then firmly believe the verity of the promiſe.* The Truth of the promiſe doth not depend upon our ſenſe and feeling of it, eſpecially when we would; there might be *evidentia credibilitatis,* when there is not *evidentia rei,* ſufficient reaſon to believe; becauſe it is a promiſe made by God, when thou doſt not as yet ſee the performance of it. Though thou haſt not taſted honey, yet thou wilt believe it to be ſweet, if told by one that hath eaten thereof.

Seventhly, *Carry thy ſelf really towards thy ſin, as thou doſt conceive, through miſtake, God doth towards thee.* Thou ſayeſt, God doth not love thee, be ſure thou doſt not love thy ſin; thou ſayeſt, he hath caſt thee off, be ſure thou caſt off thy ſin; ſmile as *little* upon thy ſin, as in thy *greateſt darkneſs* of diſcomfort, thou ſayeſt God doth upon thee. Lighten the ſhip by caſting thy ſins over-board, and thou ſhalt come ſafe to ſhoar. This Eclipſe may be by the interpoſition of ſome ſin betwixt thee, and the light of God's countenance.

Eightly, *Diligently obſerve what grace is of the greateſt growth in thy ſoul, and make the beſt improvement of that for thy ſupport.* The body natural doth grow in all the parts of it, but not equally, as to all dimenſions; the finger grows not to the magnitude of the wriſt or arm; In mixt bodies there are all the elements, but one is predominant. Amongſt the many branches of a tree, one might out-top all the reſt. In a ring of Bells, all ſound, but the great Bell is heard above them all. In the new Creature there are all Graces *radically* and *ſeminally,* but yet one might be more eminent than the reſt. In ſome, Faith (*x*); in ſome, love to God (*y*); in ſome, ſorrow for ſin (*z*); as every ſin is *radically* in every wicked man, yet ſome ſin is grown to a greater height, and, like *Saul,* is taller than the reſt; in one, coveteouſneſs; in another, paſſion; in another, pride.

x Mat. 15. 28.
y Luk. 7 44, 47.
z 2 Cor. 2. 7.
2 Chro. 33. 12.

Moral vertues are connected *communi vinculo,* with a common bond, yet they may be in ſeveral degrees: Some have them *in gradu continentiæ,* that, though the diſorders and perturbations of the ſoul are very

urgent and preſſing, yet a man is able to reſiſt, and to ſuppreſs them. Some *in gradu temporantiæ*, when the paſſions are more ſedate and calm; ſome *in gradu heroico*, when they are ſo ſubdued and reſtrained, that they are ſubject to the government and rule of Right Reaſon, the Guide and Leader of the ſoul. Now, that grace that is moſt eminent, is eaſily diſcerned. Make uſe of that.

Ninthly, *Blear not thine eyes by always poring upon thy ſin and wants, that are the reaſon of thy doubts and fears; but ſtudy alſo the Righteouſneſs and fulneſs of Chriſt, for the ſupport of hope and confidence.* Know, that if thou hadſt never ſo little ſin, (*a*) yet thou haſt need of a Saviour; and if thou haſt never ſo much, he is willing and ſufficient (*b*); if thou hadſt never ſo much ſorrow, and inherent grace, thou muſt be juſtified by the merits of Chriſt alone (*c*); and if thou haſt but ſo much as is true and ſincere, thou art juſtified, and ſhalt be (*d*) ſaved. Set thy Faith on work therefore, to lay hold upon Chriſt, and Faith will ſuck ſtrength from Chriſt, as the child doth cleave to the Mother by the navel, and receive nouriſhment from her; a twig that is ſhaken by every wind, yet tied to the body of a tree, it ſtandeth faſt; eye thy ſin to caſt thee down, and Chriſt's Righteouſneſs to raiſe thee up.

a Gal. 3. 10.
b Iſa. 1. 18.
c Job 9. 21. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Phil. 3. 8, 9.
d Mat. 12. 20.

Tenthly, *Be more in practice, than in diſputes; and wherein thou wouldſt inform thy judgment, proceed in a right method.* Many weak Chriſtians cannot ſee the complexions of their faces, becauſe they are always looking into troubled waters, ſearching into needleſs diſputes and queſtions; notional knowledg in the Scripture will never cure thy diſtemper, no more than bare reading of *Galen*, or the works of ſome Phyſitian will recover a man from a fit of ſickneſs.

And where thou wouldſt be informed, proceed in a right method, queſtion not thy election firſt, but thy true converſion. *God hath reprobated me, all will be in vain*; but thou muſt prove thy election by thy converſion, as the cauſe is diſcovered by the effect. *We muſt begin in this, where God doth end and end where God doth begin.* As on a Ladder, he that is above, if he would come down to you, muſt firſt uſe the top-rounds, but if you would go up to him, you muſt firſt uſe the bottom-rounds, and aſcend ſtep by ſtep. Election is the uppermoſt round, ſanctification is at the bottom; and by our ſanctification we muſt climb up to ſee our names written in the Book of Life. In building, men proceed *methodo ſynthetica*; in pulling down, *methodo analytica*. If you would take a Watch to pieces, you muſt begin where the Watch-maker made an end. The Carpenter when he builds, firſt lays the foundation, and finiſhes the roof laſt; when he pulls down, he takes off the roof, and ſo to the foundation. God did firſt chuſe, and then convert us; but we firſt know our converſion, and thereby our election.

Motives to get Aſſurance.

In the cloſe, take theſe Motives drawn from the utility of this Aſſurance, to quicken thee further to labour after it. This Aſſurance will be, 1. Comfortable to thy ſelf. 2. Profitable to others.

It

It will fill thee with comfort, 1. Under all God's Providences. 2. Under all God's Ordinances.

First, That is a desirable frame of spirit, that doth fit us to carry our selves under the various dispensations of divine providence (wherewith the people of God are exercised) as most becomes the Gospel of Christ, and the profession we make. Assurance helps us in this; For,

1. *Assurance sweetens every mercy*, it is the Sugar in our Wine. He knows every mercy is given in mercy, and not in wrath: he knows it is not his portion; he hath much here, but he is sure he shall have more hereafter; but the want of this imbitters all outward injoyments to the doubting Christian; who saith, what are the riches of the world to me, when I doubt whether the graces of the spirit are infused into me? what is gold without God's love? and what is plenty without hope of Heaven?

2. *Assurance will lighten every burden*; with this he can bear the burden of adversity (as *Sampson* did the gates of *Gaza* upon his back, *Judg.* 16.3.) without sinking under it.

1. *The assured Believer knows he is rich in the midst of poverty*, Col. 2. 2. Though I cannot say riches are mine, yet I can say Christ is mine, and that is more. Though I cannot say silver and gold is mine, yet I can say grace and glory is mine, and that is better. This believer can look up towards Heaven, and say, yonder is the place, the Palace, the Kingdom I have a title to, above yonder Heavens must I for ever dwell; above yonder Sun is a mansion for *me*; Oh, I long to be there, where I know I shall for ever be. My heart is filled with joy, while I think on it; Oh what joy shall enter into me, when I shall enter into that joyful blessed place; though now I walk in rags, I shall shortly be cloathed with white and glorious Robes. Now a cottage is my house, but a stately building is prepared for me, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *Joh.* 14. 2, 3.

2. *The assured believer rejoyceth in the sharpest sufferings for the Gospels sake* *. He can despise and scorn all the scornings, threatnings, and reproaches of the ungodly world; for though he seeth he is hated by men, yet he knoweth he is beloved by God.

3. *Assurance is the best Cordial in time of sickness, and a Soveraign remedy against the fears of death.* But it is sad to be a doubting Christian, when thou art a dying Christian.

Secondly, The assured believer may with comfort approach to God in all his Ordinances. 1. He can go to the Throne of Grace with humble boldness, crying, *Abba* Father. 2. When he reads or hears the Word of God, every part is welcome to his soul. When the Promises are opened, he can say, these belong to me; when threatnings are denounced, he can rejoyce, because he is delivered from the misery threatned; when commands are urged by assurance, they are much facilitated; this is my Fathers command, I will do it; my Fathers will, I will obey it. 3. He can approach with joy to the Lords Supper, and sit there with great delight. He sees the wounds, the sufferings, the sorrows of Christ, all this was for me.

Secondly, This assurance will make thee profitable unto others.

1. To the wicked. 2. To the godly.

1. To

* Heb. 10. 34. Acts 5. 40, 41. & 16. 23, 24, 25. Compare Gal. 2. 20. with Acts 20. 23, 24. & 21. 13.

1. To the wicked. By this the wicked ſhall be convinced, that Religion is a reality, that Ordinances are not empty things, when they muſt acknowledg ſurely theſe men meet with ſomething from God in duty, which we are ſtrangers to, that maketh them thus chearful in all conditions.

2. By this they ſhall be convinced, that *that* is falſe they have conceived of ſerioufneſs in Religion; that if they cloſe with Chriſt, they ſhall never have a delightful pleaſant life more. Drooping, diſconſolate, mourning Chriſtians, ſtrengthen this error in wicked men too much.

2. It will make thee profitable to the godly. 1. To the weak. 2. To the ſtrong.

Firſt, Thou wilt be profitable to the weak, by communicating thy experiences to them for their comfort and ſupport, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4.

Secondly, Thou ſhalt be profitable to the ſtrong, that have the ſame aſſurance with thy ſelf. When two ſuch meet together, oh how ſweet is their diſcourſe of the joys of Heaven, and of the comforts of the Spirit, and the delights of the life of a Chriſtian!

Theſe advantages, amongſt many others that I might have named, hath the believer, that is aſſured of his ſpiritual ſafe condition, that a bellever that yet knoweth it not, doth not ſo fully enjoy. I ſhall conclude all with that exhortation of the Apoſtle, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11, *Wherefore the rather Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election ſure----for ſo an entrance ſhall be miniſtred unto you abundantly, into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

VVhat

VVhat difference is there between the Conflict in Natural and Spiritual Perſons?

Rom. VII. 23.

But I ſee another Law in my members warring againſt the Law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of ſin which is in my members.

THE Apoſtle having ſhewed in the former Chapter, that Juſtified Perſons are not under the Law, proſecutes and amplifies that choice Privileg in this ſeventh Chapter, which hath four parts.

Parts of the Chapter.

1. An Allegory, which ſhews there is no matching with Chriſt, till we be divorced from the Law, *Verſ.* 1.—6. *Moſes* may be a good friend, but to fallen man he is ever an ill Husband, a bloudy Husband, as he was to *Zipporah*, Exod. 4. 25.

2. A complaint, partly of the Law, as an occaſion of ſins malignity, *ver.* 8, 9, 10. and partly of his own eſtate, 1. Before Converſion (as either ſecure, or deſperate, *ver.* 9, 10, 11). 2. After Converſion (as troubleſome and vexatious), *ver.* 14.——24.

3. An Apology, 1. For the Law as Spiritual, holy, juſt, and good, *ver.* 12, 14, 16. 2. For himſelf as under a force, *&c. ver.* 15, 17, 20, 22, 25. The beſt Goſpel Apology againſt ſin, is (under Chriſt) afore or after diſſent, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. This grace will allow for a good clearing of our ſelves.

4. A Gratulation, *ver.* 25. No man, eſpecially, no godly man can, under the Goſpel, want matter of thanks, be his condition never ſo ſad, ſince the former is not altogether hopeleſs, and the latter hath at preſent a part and intereſt in Chriſt.

Coherence.

My Text falls under the ſecond head. The Apoſtle's condition was bad before Converſion, ſad after Converſion, truly militant, and no releaſe from this warfare, *Eccleſ.* 8. 8. Chriſt indured the contradiction of ſinners,

ners, *Heb.* 12. 3. Christians, the contradiction both of sin and sinners, and that continually. May they not well complain? as *Psal.* 120.5,6,7. and *Gen.* 25. 22.

Division of the Text. In the words, note, 1. An Act of Observation; Godly men are great observers, especially of themselves, *ver.* 18, *I know. ver.* 21, *I find*, and in the Text, *I see*.

2. The matter observed (a Combat or Conflict). In which, note, 1. The Combatants or Champions, the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members. The *form* of a Being, Naturalists call, a Law, *Bac. de forma Calidi, Aphor.* 7. because *Forms* like *Laws*, and *Laws* like *Forms*, do ordinate and constitute Natural and Politick bodies in their being, distinctions and operations. *Vatablus* calls it, *aliam vim*, *Laws* as forms being principles of action. *Grotius* distinguisheth of a fourfold *Law*. 1. *Lex Dei*, recorded in Scripture. 2. *Lex Mentis*, the Judgment between things honest and dishonest. 3. *Lex Membrorum*, the carnal or sensual Appetite. 4. *Lex Peccati*, the Custom of sinning; to compleat which heads, we must (with the leave of that Learned Author) add two other distinctions, namely, 1. The Law of Original sin propagated by Generation, which is strengthened by custom in evil, and together with our sensual appetite depraved, makes up the Law of sin. Secondly, The Law of sanctifying Grace infused in Regeneration, which compleats the Law of the mind.

2. The equality of this fight in a reciprocal opposition, sin indwelling, fighting against Grace indwelling, and *contra* Arab. *Castramentem*, there being a pitch'd Battel between Grace and Corruption; in which, some Graces and Corruptions bear the office of Commanders, others of Common-souldiers: this is noted in the Prepositon ἀντι, compare *Heb.* 12. 4.

3. The disparity of the fight managed by way of Rebellion on the part of sin, by way of Loyalty and Authority on the part of Grace: whence *Beza* and *Piscator* render it *rebellantem*.

4. The dubiousness of the fight, both parties often fighting as it were *æquo Marte*; sometimes one, sometimes the other seeming to get the better, as in the battel between *Israel* and *Amalick*, Exod. 17. 11.

5. The sad event too often on the better side which is led *Captive*; in which term yet there is a mixture of comfort; Sin, when in Triumph acting as a Tyrant, not as a lawful Soveraign: The Law of the mind may be over-born by, but never indents with the Law of the members; as a person enslaved by force, but not by contract; or as School-boys, in a misrule, may shut their Master for a while out of doors; but at last he gets in, and they pay dearly for that affront. Withal, note in the Text, a mixture of civil and military terms to illustrate the spiritual conflict; there being a Law-suit, as well as a pitch'd Battel, between Grace and Corruption.

The scope of the Text. The Text is limited by the Apostle, to the Regenerate; yet may in a good and true sense be extended to the unregenerate also, in whom

whom there is a Law of the mind; namely, the Law of *Reason*, though not of *Regeneration*. Yea, *Porphyrius*, lib. 1. περὶ ἀποχῆς uſes the Apoſtles phraſe, calling it τὸν νόμον τῦ νεὺς. Taking therefore the Law of the mind, and the Law of the members in a large ſenſe; may not every one take up this complaint of the Apoſtle? Thence note,

In every man, eſpecially in the *Regenerate*, there is a Conflict between the Law of the *Mind*, and the Law of the *Members*. Doctr.

That it is ſo, appears by a threefold Evidence. The ὅτι.

1. By the teſtimony of Nature ſpeaking in Heathen. Thus, *Medea*, *Video meliora, proboque: deteriora ſequor.* So *Simplicius ad Epictetum*, Ἄλογος, ὄρεξις τὸν λόγον κινήσασα (τυτ' ἐστιν ἡμᾶς τὸς κατ' ἀυτὸν ὑσιωμενυς) ἠ ἀιχμαλωτὸν λαβῦσα. The irrational appetite diſplaces reaſon, &c. and leads it Captive.

2. By teſtimony of Scripture, and that 1. As to the godly, *Gal.* 5. 17, *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit*, &c. 2. As to the unregenerate, inſtance in *Herod*, who was troubled by this conflict between Luſt and Conſcience, *Mark* 6. 26. Yea, in the very Heathen, *Rom.* 2. 14, 15, who, by not hearkening to Conſcience oppoſing ſin in them, felt Conſcience accuſing them for ſin.

3. By every mans experience. Who finds not every day within himſelf a conteſt of contrary motions and inclinations? Are we not all in this point *Rebeccahs*, big, though not with *Twins*, yet with an *Eſau* and a *Jacob*, two contrary Nations ſtrugling each with other? *Gen.* 25. *verſ.* 22, 23. Oh that we had all her wiſdom and ſucceſs.

The διότι, why it's ſo, will appear in the Explication and Reſolution of the ſpecial Caſe of Conſcience aſſigned: which therefore here I paſs.

Before I propound the Caſe, let me premiſe ſome particulars, preparatory, as a Key of Explication. Prem. ſals.

1. As the great, ſo the little world (Man) is made up of contraries: The outward man of contrary Elements, humours, health, and ſickneſs; the inward man of contrary Principles, reaſon and paſſion, grace and corruption, conſcience and ſenſe.

2. Man is both an Actor in, and a Theatre of the greateſt action, and nobleſt conflict in the World, though uſually inviſible, and therefore not ſo much obſerved, *Prov.* 16. 32. He that conquers himſelf, is a nobler *Heroe* than *Alexander*, who conquered a great part of the World.

3. In the ſtate of Innocency, there was no conflict; in the ſtate of Glory, there will be no conflict; there being no corruption to combate with Grace. In a ſtate of Minority (as infants and fools) there is no conflict, till reaſon begin to dawn, and with it conſcience to actuate common principles againſt the motions of innate corruption. In a ſtate of corruption there is no ſpiritual conflict, becauſe there is no renewing grace to combate with corruption; that ſtrong man, that keeps all in peace, till a ſtronger than he comes, *Luke* 11. 21, 22.

4. The natural conflict is in every godly man, the ſpiritual conflict is in

no wicked or natural man. This I note to allay the fears of drooping Saints, who finding a conflict between conscience and corruption, conclude they are in the state of Nature, and search not for the conflict between Grace and Corruption. This is, as if a man should conclude he is a Beast, because he hath sense like a Beast, not considering that he hath reason super-added, which a Beast is not capable of.

5. There is a vast difference between the natural and the spiritual conflict. This will appear in the resolution of the case.

6. The mistake about these two conflicts, 1. Undoes natural men, who feeling a combate in themselves, fondly apprehend it to be the fight between the flesh and the spirit, and thereupon rest secure in a natural estate. 2. It troubles regenerate persons, and that in reference both to duty and comfort, making them drive heavily, because they doubt whether they be *Israelites* or *Ægyptians*.

7. As the great wisdom of God lies in governing the great world made up of contraries; so the great wisdom of a godly man, lies in governing the little world made up of like contraries.

8. This government lies principally in discerning these conflicting contraries, and improving their contrariety for the advantage of the outward and inward man. He is the wisest Physitian, who can govern the body made up of contraries; and he is the wisest Christian, who can rule his soul in the midst of contraries. In this Government Christ is Principal, *Psal.* 110. 2. A Saint Instrumental, *Hos.* 11. 12.

9. This singular wisdom is attainable in the use of ordinary means, and that by the meanest, who have grace to follow Christ's conduct: yet not by the power of free-will, or humane industry, but by the bounty of free and special Grace, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Jam.* 1. 5. *Rom.* 9. 16.

10. It cannot be expected that any unregenerate person should understand to purpose the difference between these two conflicts; because he hath no experience of this double State, and double Principle. No wonder then, if such say of me, as the *Jews* did of the Prophet, *Ezek.* 20. 49, *Doth he not speak parables?* However, for the sake of the Unregenerate, to convince them; and for the sake of the Regenerate, to comfort them; I shall endeavour (plowing with Christ's Heifer) to find out this great Riddle. And so I come to the Case, and a case of the highest concernment.

Quest. Wherein doth the Natural and Spiritual conflict differ? or, what difference is there between the conflict in the Natural and Spiritual man?

Answ. They differ principally in seven particulars: And

I. In the ground or cause of the fight, which in the Unregenerate is,

1. Natural Principles, or the reliques of Gods Image in the Understanding: The Notion of a Deity, and of loving my neighbour as my self, *&c.* are Principles, cannot be razed out of any mans heart, be he never so professt an Atheist; nor can these principles lye always idle, but will more or less be in action against corrupt inclinations.

2. Acqui-

2. Acquired Principles from common illumination, moral and religious education and cuſtom. This light diſcovers more of ſins obliquity and danger, thereby laying on a ſtronger bridle of reſtraint through fear, ſhame, *&c.* and adding ſpurs to the exerciſe of many parts of piety.

3. The natural temper of the body which indiſpoſes to ſome ſpecial ſins, as well as to ſome ſpecial graces. As all ſouls, ſo original corruption in them may be equal, yet not act *equally*, becauſe of the indiſpoſedneſs of bodily Organs. Thus ſome naturally are more chaſt, ſober, and meek than others, and hence their temper advances the combate againſt the luſts that oppoſe the fore-mentioned virtues.

4. The contrariety of one luſt to another. Grace is uniform, and each virtue linked together in a perfect ſubordination: but ſin is divided, and oppoſite to it ſelf as well as to Grace. Thus Ambition ſays, *Spend*; Covetouſneſs ſays, *Spare:* Revenge incites to murder, Self-love reſtrains for fear of an halter. Here now is a combate, but only between fleſh and fleſh, between fleſh more refined, and fleſh more corrupted. The beſt of theſe may be called a counter-motion (as in duſt and clouds agitated by contrary winds) but not properly a conflict or fight; becauſe they proceed not from a true vital principle, there being in a natural man, no principle of Spiritual Life.

On the other hand; In the Regenerate, the combate ariſeth from the Antipathy of two contrary Natures perfectly hating each other, *Gal.* 5. 17. Of all affections (as one notes well) love and hatred are firſt, and moſt uncompoundable. A godly man hates ſin as God hates it; not ſo much for its danger, as for its loathſomneſs; as ſome creatures hate filth, ſo that they will rather dye than defile themſelves. One Wolf may ſnarl at another, but the quarrel is not laid in their Natures as it is in the Wolf and Lamb, which therefore cannot be reconciled. God in Paradiſe firſt ſounded the Trumpet to this Alarm, *Gen.* 3. 15. proclaiming an eternal War between the ſeed of the Woman, and of the Serpent. As in perſons, ſo much more in principles, there is a mutual abomination. Compare *Pſalm* 139. 22. *Prov.* 29. 29. *Pſalm* 97. 10. and 119. 128. and *Rom.* 8. 7. Enemies may, but Enmity can never be reconciled.

II. They differ in the object or matter of conflict; which in a natural man is, 1. Groſſer evils that ſtartle the Conſcience. 2. Infamous evils that are attended with worldly fear or ſhame, Or, 3. Some particular evils that croſs temper, education, or cuſtom, *&c.*

But in ſpiritual perſons, the matter of conflict is, 1. Little ſins as well as great. 2. Secret ſins as well as open. 3. The firſt riſings as well as the groſs acts. 4. Sins which promiſe worldly ſafety, credit, profit, contentment, as well as thoſe ſins that threaten the contrary. 5. In a word, all moral evil; hatred and antipathy being of the whole kind, *Pſal.* 119. 128, eſpecially of thoſe evils which moſt indanger the New-man, *Pſalm* 18. 23. and ſuch as are beloved ſins, *Mat.* 18. *ver.* 8, 9.

III. They differ in the ſubject of the conflict. In natural men, the fight is in ſeveral faculties, reaſon fighting againſt ſenſe and paſſion, or the dictate of conſcience againſt the corrupt inclination of the will; whence the fight is more at a diſtance by miſſile Arms and velitation. But in the regenerate man, the fight is more cloſe in the ſame faculty; the wiſdom of fleſh and ſpirit counter-acting in the ſame underſtanding, the luſtings of the fleſh and ſpirit in the ſame will: whence the fight is, as it were, *inter Triarios*, Grace and Corruption immediately; which at firſt haply was managed by the *Haſtati* and *Scutati*, Reaſon and Intereſt. The former is like the fight of the Soldiers of Fortune, more lazy, and by way of Siege; the latter more keen and vigorous, by way of Aſſault or onſet; like that of *Scanderbeg*, who fought with his Enemies breaſt to breaſt in a Box or Grate.

IV. They differ in the Inſtruments or Weapons wherewith they combate. The natural mans weapons are (like himſelf) carnal; to wit natural or moral reaſon, worldly fears or hopes, and ſometimes ſpiritual fears or hopes, but carnalized, namely, ſlaviſh fear, and mercenary hopes. But the Regenerate mans weapons are Spiritual, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. to wit gracious Intereſt, and all the ſpiritual Armour, *Epheſ.* 6. *verſe* 11. ———18. eſpecially the Shield of Faith, and the Sword of the Spirit.

V. They differ in the manner of the fight. The natural mans combate is more mercenary, admits of more Parleys, Ceſſations, Correſpondencies, as 1 *Sam.* 15. 9. *Sauls* fight with *Amaleck*. But the ſpiritual man (as ſuch) fights it out to the laſt, and will give no Quarter. The former is like the ſtrife between Wind and Tide, which often come about, and are both of one ſide; the later is like the Dam and the Tide, that ſtrive till one be born down: or like Stream and Tide, meeting and conflicting till one hath over-born the other.

VI. They differ in the extent of the conflict, in relation to its ſubject and duration. The extent of the Subject is double. 1. As to the Faculties. 2. As to the Acts. As to the Faculties; The ſeat of War in the Regenerate, is every faculty, fleſh and ſpirit being ever mixed (as light and darkneſs in every point of Air in the twilight) 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. Grace and Corruption leaven the whole man: So that in the Regenerate, there is at the ſame time both a Civil and a Foreign War, that in the ſame faculty, this in one faculty againſt another.

Contrariwiſe, in the Unregenerate, there is uſually nothing but a forreign War between ſeveral faculties; there being nothing of ſpiritual good in their wills and affections, to ſet the ſame faculty againſt it ſelf. 2. It extends alſo to every act of piety and charity (eſpecially if more ſpiritual) *Rom.* 7. 21. for which, the natural man hath no conflict (but againſt them) unleſs it be to ſtop the mouth of Conſcience inlightned, *&c.* Nor indeed doth he know experimentally what ſpiritual acts of Piety are. But the regenerate find it by conſtant experience; Faith and Unbelief, Humility and Pride, ever oppoſing and counter-working each other: whence he is forced to cut his way through his Enemies, and

to

to diſpute it ſtep by ſtep. Others may ſeek, but he ſtrives, *Luke* 13. 24, and takes the Kingdom of Heaven by an holy violence, *Matth.* 11. 12, in ſpight of ſpiritual enemies that way-lay him within and without.

2. As to the extent of duration of the War, which being in the Regenerate irreconcilable, muſt needs be interminable; like the War between the *Romans* and *Carthaginians* that was intail'd to poſterity: or as fire and water will fight for ever, if together for ever. In the natural man (contrariwiſe) the quarel is ſoon took up, as between the *Romans* and other Nations; there being not that antipathy between Reaſon and Corruption, as there is between Grace and Corruption.

VII. They differ in the concomitants and conſequents of the fight. And 1. The fight in natural men may ſtand with the conſtant practice of, and living in ſin againſt the light of Conſcience. Godly men ſin more with knowledg, but wicked men more againſt knowledg. He that is born of God, doth not commit ſin, that is, make a trade of living and lying in known ſin, 1 *John* 3. 9.

2. The fight in the Unregenerate hinders not the perfection and conſummation of ſin in the antecedent deliberation and purpoſe, in the preſent delight and complacency, and the following pertinacy and impenitency. Inſtance in *Saul*, *Herod*, *Judas*, and others. But the Spirit, by its conflict, breaks the power of ſin in all theſe in the Regenerate, that they can neither do good as they would, nor ſin as they otherwiſe would, *Gal.* 5. 17.

3. The fight in natural men ſeeks only the repreſſion, not the ſuppreſſion of ſin, to lop the ſuperfluous branches, not ſtub up the root; to charm the Serpent, not to break its head. But the ſpiritual fight ſeeks the full mortification and abolition of ſin, *Rom.* 6. 6. (hatred ſeeks the deſtruction of its Enemy, 1 *Sam.* 24. 19. and 1 *John* 3. 15.) and the compleat perfection of Grace, though not attainable in this life, *Phil.* 3. *verſ.* 10.—14. This for the firſt branch of Wiſdom, which teaches to diſcern between the natural and the ſpiritual Conflict.

The ſecond Branch of Heavenly Wiſdom, lies in improving Application. theſe Spititual Contrarieties, by ſiding with the ſpirit againſt the fleſh.

1. This is done. 1. By watching all the forces, deſigns, and motions of the Enemy. We have in us Legions of theſe Devils, the meaneſt of them too ſtrong, and too ſubtil for us, *Heb.* 3. 13. true *Gibeonites*, that can eaſily cheat us with their mouldy Bread, and clouted Garments; Sons of *Anak*, all of one confederacy, and ſworn Enemies of our ſalvation; had we not need have our eyes in our heads, and ſet watchfulneſs upon the forlorn hope? 1 *Cor* 16. 13.

2. By making head early againſt the Enemy. *Principiis obſta*, &c. nip ſin in the bud, cruſh this Cockatrice in the ſhell, ſtrangle this helliſh Brat in the birth; take heed of the firſt appearances of evil, take its firſt Alarms; ſlight not the ſmalleſt ſin or occaſion of ſinning. How much

much miſchief is done by a little wound, a little Thief, a ſmall Spark? *Jam.* 3. 5. and 2 *Sam.* 11. 2.

3. Oppoſe eſpecially thy Maſter-Luſt. Fight (in compariſon) neither againſt ſmall nor great, but againſt the King of theſe Helliſh Regiments, 1 *Kings* 22. 31. Be ſure to pull out that right eye. This is the skirt Satan lays hold of, in wraſtling with thee, to thy hazzard, and his no ſmall advantage; The *Goliah* and *Holofernes*, who being once ſlain, the *Philiſtins* and *Aſſyrians* will ſoon be routed. Throw the head of this *Sheba* over the wall, and the enemy will retreat ſhamefully.

4. Never enter the field without thy Second: Fight under the Shield, as well as under the Banner of thy General. In other fights the General flies to the Battel upon the wings of his Army, but here the Army flies upon the wings of their General. This is done by Faith and Prayer. Thus *David* conquered *Goliah*, 1 Sam. 17. 45. and the *Philiſtins*, 2 Sam. 5. 19, 23. Fight always upon thy knees; Let *Moſes* be praying while *Joſhua* is fighting, *Exod.* 17. 11. May not Chriſt take it ill if thou carry thy ſelf as if thou meaneſt to ſteal a victory before he know of it?

5. Put on, keep on, ſtand in, and exerciſe thy Spiritual Arms, *Epheſ.* 6. *v.* 10.——18. That only is Armour of proof: never any girds it on but may boaſt before the Victory. Allude to 1 *Kings* 20. 11. never any fought proſperouſly without it: It's our metal as well as our weapon. Neither Earth nor Hell can ſtand againſt this Artillery of Heaven. Let not Satan find thee diſarmed, leſt he leave thee diſpoyled. There is no fighting with carnal weapons againſt a ſpiritual Enemy. You may as well beat the Devil with a ſword or ſpear, as conquer ſin by the power of Free-will, or with moral and wordly Arguments. They are but paper-bullets, and paper-walls; the ſcorn, not the Terror of Hell, though uſeful in ſome caſes. Remember withal, there are no arms for thy Back-parts.

6. With ſome Luſts fight like the *Parthians*, flying. 1 *Cor.* 6. 18. and 2 *Tim.* 2. 22. This is but an honourable retreat, and warlike ſtratagem, *Joſh.* 8. 15. *Judg.* 20. 32. Youthful Luſts are like the *Baſilisk*, or like a burning-glaſs in the Sun, that may not be looked on, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. with other Luſts fight like the *Romans*, charging home.

7. Entertain no Parley with thy Enemy. This coſt all mankind dear at firſt, *Gen.* 3. *ver.* 1.—4. It's diſloyal, looks like a confederacy, and is very dangerous. Come not into *Jaels* tent, ſleep not in *Dalilahs* lap, talk not with *Joab*, leſt he ſmite thee under the fifth Rib. Sin and Satan are too cunning Sophiſters for us to diſpute withal. He in a manner gives up his Cauſe that will plead it with the Devil. The beſt Anſwer to Satans Suit, is a round and churliſh denial, *Zach.* 3. 2. *Matt.* 4. 10. *Jude ver.* 9. Parleying is a kind of faint denial, and draws on this impudent Suitor.

8. Take advantage by every thing that befalls thee in this Spiritual Warfare. Eye thy reſerves: The Captain of thy Salvation is both thy Vanguard and thy Rereward, and will be thy Reward: thou gaineſt thy Husband, as *David* did his Wife, by conquering theſe *Philiſtins*: and, while thou art fighting for him, he is weaving thy Crown, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. Eye thy fellow-ſoldiers, thoſe Worthies of the Heavenly *David*, that are both Militant and

and Triumphant, *Heb.* 12. 1. Example is very forcible. Yea, take advantage by thy very Foyls, to be more humble, charitable, dependent, watchful and couragious. Let not the Enemy gain the field, after Conqueſt, by a back-blow of Pride. This *Antiochus* gains (often) more by flattery than by force, *Dan.* 11. 21, 22. It's honourable for Chriſt to ſay, *Well done*, &c. but dangerous for Satan to ſay, *well done*; and ſafe for thee to ſay, *poorly done*, when thou haſt done thy beſt. Deſpiſe thy ſelf when others admire thee; and be aſſured that ſelf-admiration is the moſt dangerous Devil in the World. Eſpecially, improve advantages prudently: when thou haſt thy Enemy on thy hip, yea, on the ground; fall with all thy weight upon him, give him no Quarter, leſt thou meet with the doom of *Ahab*, 1 Kings 20. 42, and of the *Iſraelites*, Numb. 33. 55, 56. Here, as one notes well, Learn Wiſdom of the Serpents-brood, who never thought they had Chriſt ſure enough, though they had him in the Grave, *Mat.* 27. 64. Remember, it's thy higheſt Wiſdom, firſt to diſcern, next to improve the Spiritual Contrarieties that act in thy boſome. He is the wiſeſt man that knows himſelf, and he the ſtrongeſt man that conquers himſelf. This alone is the true *Iſraelite*, who by conquering himſelf, doth (in a pious ſenſe) overcome both Heaven, Earth and Hell, *Gen.* 32. 28.

What

VVhat Faith is that, which except we have in Prayer, we muſt not think to obtain any thing of God?

James 1. 6.

But let him aſk in Faith.——

FOR the Connexion of theſe words with the former, ſince they will not give much light to the Queſtion I am to handle, and the time will hardly permit things more neceſſary to be ſpoken; I ſhall wholly wave, or very briefly ſpeak to.

The ſubject I am to ſpeak to, is to ſhew what is meant here by asking *in Faith*, or what Faith that is, which whoſo hath not, muſt not, or hath no reaſon to expect to receive any thing from God. God may beſtow his mercies where and on whom he pleaſeth; but he is no way engaged by promiſe, to beſtow any mercy on ſuch an one that asketh not in Faith. It is not ſaid that ſuch an one ſhould expect any great matters from God, but not any thing at all; the leaſt mercy is greater than he hath any reaſon to think he ſhall receive; not only he ſhall not receive Wiſdom, ſpoken of *verſ.* 5, but not any thing. Wiſdom he may get as *Achitophel* did, and many other things, without praying in Faith, or praying at all; but for Divine Wiſdom, or for any bleſſing from God, he may think what he will, but if the Apoſtle may be thought worthy to adviſe him, he would not have him think to receive any thing, except he ask, and ask in Faith. Therefore it much concerns us to know what is meant by asking in Faith, ſince the want of it makes our Prayers of none effect; if we pray without it, we may pray, but you cannot juſtly expect any return of your Prayers, except it be as of an arrow ſhot

ſhot up to Heaven upon your own head to your wounding. Of this Queſtion I ſhall ſpeak very plainly, as the Lord ſhall enable me, in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual things.

Some may make it to imply more to ask *in* Faith, than to ask *with* Faith; or that it is more to be *in Faith*, than for *Faith* to be *in us*. To be *in* Love is more than *to* love; and when it is ſaid, *Rev.* 1. 10, that the Apoſtle was *in* the Spirit, it ſhews that not only he *had* the Spirit, and was *filled* with it, but there were great overflowings, and a ſuper-abundance of the Spirit. This the Apoſtle ſeems to call, *Jam.* 5. 15, the Prayer *of* Faith, as if their *Faith* rather prayed than *they*; as *Paul* ſpeaks, *It is not I, but the Grace of God in me*: when Faith rather may be ſaid to act *us*, than we to act *Faith*.

But I ſuppoſe thoſe high degrees of Faith cannot be meant here, becauſe it is ſaid, that they who have not this Faith, muſt not think to receive any thing, not the leaſt; if ſo, then the higheſt degrees of Faith ſhould be required for the obtaining the loweſt degrees of Mercy; but Scripture promiſes are made to the *Truth*, and not to the *degrees* of Grace. To Faith that is but as a grain of Muſtard-ſeed, to remove Mountains, and to Love that is but a ſpark, to be victorious, *Matt.* 12. 20. but I ſhall rather indeavour to ſhew you how Faith is taken here, than how it is taken in other places; therefore, *To ask in Faith*, may be here ſpoken in reference to the Perſon that prays, *viz.* he that prays muſt be in the Faith, a faithful or Righteous Perſon. The Scripture is full to this purpoſe, as *Pſal.* 66. 18, *If I regard iniquity in mine heart*, though my tongue do not plead for it, nay, though it ſpeaks againſt it, though I refrain from it in my Life; for we may love the ſin we commit not; and if I do ſo regard it in mine heart, God will not hear my Prayers: if I give it ſo much as a good look, for ſo the *Hebrew*, *If I ſee iniquity in my heart*, if I take pleaſure in ſin; for *David* calls it *painful iniquity*, for ſo in the *Hebrew*. No Saint can live without committing ſin, but all Saints live without regarding it in their hearts. So alſo *Jam.* 5. 15, *The prayer of a righteous man availeth much*: how much is not ſet down, becauſe it cannot be ſet down *how much* it avails, as *much* as they *pleaſe*, they may have what they *will*; but for a wicked man, though his Prayers were effectual, they avail not much, ſince their deſires are for temporals. The other places are full to this point, *viz.* that the Prayers of none but Righteous perſons are accepted with God, as *Joh.* 9. 31. *Chap.* 1. 15. *Prov.* 28. 9. 1 *Joh.* 3. 15.

I. To this may be objected, that many unregenerate and profligate Wretches have obtained by Prayer; as ſcoffing *Iſhmael*, Gen. 21. 17; nay, *Ahab*, a man that ſold himſelf to work wickedneſs, prevailed with God for an adjournment of the Judgment denounced.

I anſwer, 1. This was done by way of Common Providence, or Gods Prerogative, not by way of Promiſe, ſo that they could not reaſonably expect that their Prayer ſhould be heard.

2. God did this to honour the Ordinance of Prayer. As when our

Children come and tell us of ſome poor body, though we may not think it fit to relieve him in reſpect of his wants, yet we give him, for fear we ſhould hinder our Children from acts of Charity; for they, not knowing our reaſon of denying him relief, will expound it to be our neglect of the poor. So many times God may give to bad men, leſt good men ſhould be diſcouraged from Prayer.

3. God gives to wicked men when they pray, oft-times for the ſtrengthening of his Peoples Faith; for they may be ſure, if God hears the Croakings of Ravens, he will hear the Mournings of Doves.

II. You may farther ſay, Are wicked men bound to pray, ſince their Prayers are an abomination, and they cannot ask in Faith?

I anſwer, 1. Inability to pay a debt, doth not acquit one from it, nor cancel the Obligation. If one blows out the Candle, one cannot excuſe ones ſelf for not working, by ſaying they could not work in the dark; nor can a boy excuſe himſelf from ſaying the Leſſon he hath torn out of his Book.

2. Becauſe wicked men break others of Gods Commandments, it cannot juſtifie them in the breaking of this; ſin doth ſuper-induce a new Obligation, *viz.* to puniſhment, but doth not cancel their former, *viz.* to Duty.

3. Wicked men ſin not in praying, but in praying ſo.

4. Doubtleſs the wickedeſt man in the World is bound to deſire Grace.

III. But doth not this make God a reſpecter of perſons, ſince he will hear none but his own Children, and them that love him? if a Judg ſhould favour his Relations in Judicature, he ſhould be unjuſt.

I anſwer, No, God is no reſpecter of Perſons, by doing thus.

1. Becauſe the Prayers of Saints are better, as well as their perſons nearer; for the Prayers of the wicked are lazy, irreverent, brutiſh wanton Prayers, *Hoſ.* 7. 14. if Gods people ſhould pray ſo, God would not hear them neither.

2. If Unbelievers could pray better than Saints, yet God might acquit the Saint, and condemn the Unbeliever, as a Judg may paſs Sentence againſt one who hath paid ninety and nine pounds of an hundred, and acquit another who hath not paid a farthing, if his Surety hath paid it.

3. Though in matter of Juſtice we are not to reſpect perſons, *Levit.* 19. 15; yet in matters of favour we may, *Gal.* 6. 10. This may be the firſt meaning of the words, but not only, nor as I conceive the chief. Therefore.

II. *To ask in Faith*, is to believe that *all* we ſay in Prayer is *true*; when we confeſs our ſelves to be grievous ſinners, we are to think our ſelves to be as great ſinners as we ſay we are; when we call God Almighty our Father, we are to believe him to be ſo.

Then the poor Soul will ſay, Alas, I cannot pray in Faith; for I cannot ſay *Our Father*: ſince I do not believe that I am his child, how then can I call him *Father*.

I Anſwer, 1. Thou mayeſt call him *Father*, for he is thy *Father*; if thou

thou ſhouldeſt ſee divers children playing ſome untowardneſs in the ſtreet, and ſhould ſee a man that paſſed by, go and ſingle out one of them, and correct him, and yet the child ſhould follow him, would you not ſay he was the father of that child? for a ſtrange child would flye *from him*, or flye *at* him if he ſhould ſtrike him. Doſt thou not follow God when he corrects thee? be of good comfort, God is thy Father, and thou art his child.

When that precious man Mr. *Murcot* was in great anguiſh, fearing that God was not his Father, theſe words were impreſſed on his mind, *If I am not thy Father, why doſt thou follow after me?*

Nay, not only God *is* thy Father, but thou *thinkeſt* ſo alſo. When *Naamans* ſervants called him father, what did they mean but to ſhew that they acknowledged that he carried himſelf rather as a Father than a Maſter. When the prodigal returned, though he acknowledged that he was not worthy to be called his Son, yet he called him Father, ſince he had failed of nothing that might be expected from a loving tender Father. Mayeſt not thou call God thy Father upon this account? hath he not dealt with thee in abundance of tender Compaſſion? nay, more than the tendereſt Parent in the World? Give God the Glory due to his goodneſs, call him Father; for thou mayeſt truly ſay he hath dealt ſo with thee. The ſame Mr. *Murcot* being troubled upon the ſame account, *viz.* the fear that God was not his Father, had theſe words come into his mind, with power, *viz. If I am not thy Father, am I thy Enemy?* God argues thus with the *Jews*, Deut. 32. 6.

III. We are to believe, that whatſoever we ask of God in Prayer, is according to his will, 1 *Joh.* 5. 14.

The poor doubting Soul will ſay then, I dare not pray for the recovery of my child, ſince I know not whether it be the will of God it ſhall recover or no.

I Anſwer, Thine asking what God hath decreed not to give, makes not thy Prayer ſinful, but thine asking what he hath forbid thee to deſire; for the will of Gods Decree is not the rule for us to walk by, but the will of his Command, *Deut.* 29. 29. If what we pray for, be ſuch as is lawful and good for us to deſire, though God ſhould tell us by a Prophet that he would not grant it, yet we might lawfully pray for it, and be blameleſs; for ſo did *David*, 2 Sam. 12. nay, though God ſhould ſend us word by a Prophet that we ſhould dye and not live, yet we might pray, and not only be blameleſs but ſucceſsful, for ſo was *Hezekiah*; nay, though God ſhould forbid us to pray, yet ſince he commands us to pray in his Word, we may pray and be heard; for though God bid *Jacob* let him go, yet he wreſtled on, and obtained the bleſſing: and *Moſes*, though God bid him let him alone, yet *Moſes* did not let him alone, and prevail'd. So then to ask things according to the will of God, is to ask nothing that is unlawful to ask; as for one to pray that God would proſper us in evil ways, this is to ask what is not according to his will. I ſay, you are to pray for nothing that is any way unlawful to be deſired. Now it is not enough that the thing it ſelf be lawful to be

deſired, but the end for which we deſire it muſt be lawful; for if we deſire lawful things for unlawful ends, we ask amiſs, *Jam.* 4. 3. The end why we deſire ſuch a mercy, muſt be ſuch as God approves of by his Word, as well as the thing it ſelf. To deſire gifts of Edification for Oſtentation, though according to the Will of God, as to the thing deſired, yet as to the end it is abominable.

As concerning the matter of our Prayers we are to believe, as hath been ſaid; ſo as to God we are to believe ſeveral things. Indeed ſcarce any of his Attributes but ſome way or other we are to act our Faith upon in Prayer; but I ſhall chuſe ſome few on which the eye of Faith is eſpecially fixed in Prayer.

The firſt is Gods *Omniſcience*, for elſe we ſhall be at a great loſs.

I. If we believe not this, how can we be aſſured that God hears our Prayers.

For, 1. In reſpect of the number of Prayers, there being Millions of Prayers put up at the ſame time to God, if he be not Omniſcient, how is it poſſible he ſhould hear all; if any ſhould not be heard, how knoweſt thou that thine is not the Prayer that is not heard.

2. In reſpect of the Secrecy of Prayer; for except God know our hearts, he cannot know our prayers; for it is the heart that prays, the tongue only ſpeaks, *Orat mens, lingua loquitur.*

3. If God knew not the heart, the poor ſoul who pray'd with ſighs and groans that cannot be expreſſed, ſhould find no acceptance; when the hypocrite that ſpeaks much, and means nothing, ſhall be heard for his much babling.

4. The Saints ask ſuch things that require infinite Knowledg and Wiſdom to do for us; for when we deſire God to make us know him, it requires more wiſdom, than for us to teach an Infant the Mathematicks. So we deſire God to cure us of our ſpiritual diſtempers; alas they are ſo various, ſo contrary, ſo deeply rooted in our Natures, we are ſuch froward unruly Patients, that it requires infinite Wiſdom to heal us; for when God goes to cure our Pride by afflicting us, then our impatience is increaſed: That which is the cure of one corruption, increaſeth another.

If we believe not Gods Wiſdom and Omniſcience, we cannot acquieſce in Gods anſwer of Prayers; for we may *ſuffer*, but not *aquieſce* in Gods anſwer of Prayers.

II. We are to believe Gods *Providence*, that he rules and orders all things. Who ſo thinks that all things are ruled by ſecond Cauſes, by the Power and Policy of Men, or by the Stars, or Chance, they will not Pray at all, or go to God meerly as a refuge: We ſhall pray to God, but truſt to our ſelves, or to Medicines when we are ſick, and to our food when we are well. We may be confident we ſhall be delivered, but we ſhall not at all truſt that God will deliver us. To ſtrengthen our Faith in this, we muſt know, that thoſe things that ſeem to be leaſt within the compaſs of Providence, are wholly guided by it.

1. Things

1. Things Natural; God makes the Sun to ariſe, and the Rain to fall, *Matt.* 5, *Gives to every ſeed his own body*, 1 Cor. 15.

2. The ſmalleſt things they eſcape not Providence; God numbers the hairs of our head, *Matt.* 10. 30.

3. Things Caſual, *Prov.* 6. 16. That which we call Chance-medley, is providential as to God, The man (1 *Kings*) drew a bow *at a venture*, and yet God directed it to an hairs breadth.

3. The Counſels of men, yea, againſt God, yet are ordered by the determinate Counſel of God, *Acts* 2. 23.

5. Things moſt unruly; The raging Sea goes ſo far, and no further, by Gods Decree: the roaring Lion cannot deſtroy a Swine, nor afflict nor tempt a Saint, without Gods leave, *Job* 1. *Luk.* 22. 32. The wrath of Man, as well as the rage of the Devil, is ordered and reſtrained by the Wiſdom and Power of God, *Pſal.* 66.

6. The skill and inventions of men, *Iſa.* 28. 27, 28.

7. Sin it ſelf, whether of Omiſſion or Commiſſion, as ſilence and diſcord in Muſick, ſerves to make the Harmony ſweeter.

III. Gods *Omnipotence* is to be believed, elſe we will ſtagger through unbelief. This was that in which the eminency of *Abrahams* Faith did appear, *Rom.* 4. 21; and of the Centurion's, *Mat.* 8: and Chriſt far more blames them that queſtion his *Can* than his *Will*, for he doth not only reprove the Leper, *Mat.* 8, but ſo ſharply reproves him, *Mar.* 9, that he makes him weep, becauſe he ſaid, *If thou canſt*; and he ſaith, *If thou canſt believe*, to ſhew that we cannot believe, if we do not believe Gods Power. We doubtleſs are generally faulty this way, though we are aſhamed to own it, as you may ſee by this inſtance: If we have two children ſick, the one whoſe death would be far more afflictive to us, hath ſome cold, or ſome other ſmall diſtemper, the other of ſome mortal diſeaſe, and given up by Phiſitians; thou prayeſt for the recovery of both, but for which of thoſe two's recovery art thou leaſt confident? is it not of his who is moſt ſick? and why ſo? but becauſe thou queſtioneſt Gods Power and Providence: If thou ſhalt ſay, my ſins are ſo great, God will not hear my Prayers and heal my Child; for if indeed that were the reaſon of thy fearing that God will not hear thee, thou wouldſt rather fear it as to thine other Child, ſince his death would be more afflictive.

Now the Saints have more reaſon to ſtrengthen their Faith in the Omnipotence of God in Prayer, than wicked men; becauſe the things worldly men deſire, need not Omnipotence to do. A creature may do what they deſire, except God will withdraw his common Providence; for one that is worth an hundred thouſand pounds, can make a poor man rich; and ſome Medicines in an ordinary way of Providence have vertue to cure many Diſeaſes: But the things the People of God deſire, cannot be done but by Omnipotence, *Epheſ.* 1. 19.

IV. We muſt act our Faith upon his *Goodneſs* and *Bounty*: for we muſt not only have high thoughts of Gods other Excellencies, but of his Goodneſs alſo, of his abundant willingneſs to do us good, and loathneſs to afflict us, for ſurely he never afflicts us but in caſe of neceſſity, 1 *Pet.* 1.

If

If need be you are in many Tribulations. When he afflicts us, he only gives us *neceſſaries*; but when he beſtows Mercies, he gives us not only for our neceſſity, but *richly to enjoy*. When we go to a Covetous man for Money, he parts with every peny as with a drop of blood; for us to think God parts ſo with his Mercies, that he is hard to be intreated, and that he is an hard Maſter either for *Work* or *Wages*, are thoughts utterly unworthy, and ſhamefully diſhonourable to the goodneſs of God. If thy child, whoſe finger if it ſhould but ake, thine heart akes, ſhould think thou grudgeſt him every bit of meat he eats, thou wouldſt think him a wretched child, unworthy of thy tender affections: and muſt it not be far worſe in thee to have ſuch thoughts of God? Since *tam pius nemo, tam pater nemo.* Was it ſo great a grief to *Peter*, to have Chriſt queſtion his love, *Joh.* 21. 17, though he had given but ſad teſtimony of his love but lately? and can it chuſe but much offend God for thee to queſtion Gods Love to thee, nay, his Goodneſs in it ſelf, when God hath given thee no cauſe of either? *Mal.* 2. 1. We ſhould go to God with as much confidence of his Love, and readineſs to do us good, as the child doth to the tendereſt Parent, as we do to the deareſt Friend we have in the whole world, and much more abundantly: If we do not believe that the goodneſs of God is as much above the goodneſs and love of our deareſt Friend, as we account his Wiſdom and Power above our Friends, we have unworthy thoughts of that Attribute which God hath moſt abundantly manifeſted, and would have moſt glorified; and the love our Friend bears us, is but a drop from, and of that Ocean that is in God. Doubtleſs God loves his Enemies more than we love our Friends: he loves us more (if we love him) than we love our ſelves or him. Surely God loves the weakeſt Saint on Earth, more than the higheſt Angel in Heaven loves him: For when God ſaith, That he *ſo loved the world*, it was ſuch a *Sic* there was no *Sicut* for it; it might not be ſaid as the Angels loved God. Ah, we deal unworthily with God in having baſe low thoughts of his goodneſs; he hath little deſerved it at our hands; he that hath done ſuch Wonders and Miracles of Mercies for us, and hath promiſed to do more: Say that every Mercy is too great for thee to receive, but ſay not that any is too great for God to give: Surely, ſurely God is more willing to give, than we are to receive Mercies.

But you will ſay, *If God be ſo willing to beſtow Mercies, why doth he not beſtow them without Prayers, and ſuch importunity?*

I anſwer, God doth not thus, becauſe he is not willing, but becauſe we are not fit for Mercies; for God *waits to be gracious*: The tender Mother had rather give her child Cordials than bitter Pills, but her child is ſick: By our Prayers we make not God more willing, but we become more prepared for Mercies; for our Prayers exerciſe, and ſo ſtrengthen Grace, and ſtrong Grace weakens and mortifies Corruption, and then we are fit for Mercies. God only ſtays while he may bleſs us indeed, as *Jabez* phraſeth it. One that is in a Boat, and pulls a Rope whoſe other end is tied to a Rock, pulls not the Rock to the Boat, but the Boat to the Rock; ſo our importunities move not God, but us.

But you will ſay, When we pray for others, this reaſon holds not, for their graces are not encreaſed by our praying for their deliverances from miſery or danger, or the Church from Perſecution. I anſwer,

I anſwer, It is true, but our Prayers add to our reward, for God *is in* goodneſs, as Satan is in badneſs, and much more abundantly: whereas when Satan hath a Commiſſion, and intends to do ſome miſchief, he, as oft as he can, engageth Witches to put him upon doing that which he intends to do; howſoever that he may involve them in the guilt, as if they themſelves, or that he had not done it if they had not put him upon it. So God, that the Saints may have the reward of the good he doth to others, as if they themſelves had done it, or as if God would not have done it without their Prayers, puts them upon praying for thoſe Mercies for others, which he will do howſoever, *Iſa.* 59. 16.

III. The third Object of Faith are the *Promiſes*, and there are three kinds, ſome *to* Prayer, ſome *of* Prayer, ſome to the *Perſon* Praying. We are to act our Faith upon all, but for brevity ſake (for I am forced to contract) I ſhall anſwer but one Objection.

The poor ſoul will ſay, *I do not believe I have any intereſt in the Promiſes, therefore I cannot pray in Faith.*

I anſwer, To obtain the Mercies included in a promiſe, it is not required that we ſhould believe our intereſt in it, but the truth; not that God will perform to us, but to thoſe to whom it belongs, though you do not believe it belongs to you; for the promiſes made to Graces, are made to them that have them, not to them that believe: as for example, the promiſes made to Faith, are made to them that have Faith, though they believe not that they do believe; and that poor ſouls doubt that God will never make good any promiſe to them, proceeds not from any doubt of Gods veracity or faithfulneſs, but of their own unworthineſs and non-intereſt in them.

IV. The fourth and main Object of Faith which our Faith muſt eye in our Prayers, is *Chriſt*, in whom all the Promiſes are *Yea* and *Amen*, who hath reconciled the Perſon and Attributes of God: and concerning Chriſt we are to believe,

I. The great love God bears to Chriſt, which is doubtleſs greater than to the whole Creation; for to which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, *Thou art my beloved in whom I am well pleaſed?* Gods Love to Chriſt is not only greater, but diffuſive; for the Love that God bears to Chriſt is as the Oyl that was poured upon the head of *Aaron*, which ran down to the skirts of his Garments: ſo the love that God bears to Chriſt terminates not in the Perſon of Chriſt, but is communicated to all that are his. As *Haman*, to ſhew the great hatred he bore to *Mordecai*, would not bound his malice on the Perſon of *Mordecai*, but would deſtroy the whole Nation: So God thought it too ſmall a Teſtimony of his Love to Chriſt, to be well pleaſed with Chriſt (for ſo he is with the Angels) but he is well pleaſed in Chriſt with the whole world; I mean all Nations. We muſt believe this, or we cannot expect any favour for his ſake. His Love to Chriſt is ſo great, that his Love to Chriſt is greater than his hatred to ſinners; ſo that any ſinner may be reconciled and accepted through Chriſt. Chriſt came to reconcile God and ſinners, not God and ſin. As one who deſires the King to be reconciled to ſuch a Traytor, doth not deſire him to be reconciled to the Treaſon, but to the Traytor.

II. We are to believe the fulneſs of Chriſt's Satisfaction, and the greatneſs of

of the value and efficacy of the death of Chriſt; for if Juſtice be not ſatisfied, we have no Throne of Grace, but a Seat and Bar of Juſtice to come before. The blood of Chriſt hath a pacifying, puriſying, purchaſing, perfuming, reconciling, ſatisfying, juſtifying Vertue: It pacifies Gods wrath, it reconciles and juſtifies our Perſons, it purifies our Nature, it perfumes our Duties, it purchaſeth our Inheritance.

III. We are to believe the efficacy and infallible ſucceſs of Chriſts Interceſſion. The fulneſs of Chriſts Interceſſion is in this, that he doth Three things for us all, that we ſtand in need of; according to what was Typified by the High-Prieſt, for he did three things:

1. He ſprinkled the blood upon the Mercy-ſeat, hereby an Atonment was made as to our ſins, they being pardoned.

2. He went in with Incenſe, hereby our Duties were perfumed: ſo God is ſaid to inhabit the Praiſes of his people, and to dwell in thick darkneſs, *i. e.* in the thick ſmoke of the Incenſe.

3. He had the names of the Tribes engraven on his breaſt or heart. Chriſt pleads the love he bears to his people. Three places the names of the Saints are written in, out of either whereof, nor Men nor Devils can blot them, *viz.* in the Book of Life, on the palms of his hands, and on the heart of Chriſt. I may add the Fourth thing the High-Prieſt did when he entred into the Holy-Place, *viz.* he went in with all his rich Prieſtly Garments, to ſhew we ſhould be clothed with the rich Robes of Chriſts Righteouſneſs, for what the High Prieſt did, he did not in his perſonal, but in his publick capacity. Now the efficacy of his Interceſſion was not only from the wonderful Love God bore to Chriſt, from the unparalleld Intereſt Chriſt had in the Father; by theſe means we may expect all acts of favour: but we have Juſtice on our ſide: for favour is an arbitrary thing, therefore Chriſt is our Advocate, 1 *John* 2. 1, 2, he preſents our caſe not by way of petition, but by way of pleading; for Advocates do not petition but plead.

So then Chriſt doth Four things as to our Prayers, 1. He endites them by his Spirit, he perfumes them by his Merit, then he preſents our Prayers and Perſons; for we have acceſs through him, *Eph.* 3. 12, and then ſuperadds his own Interceſſion, his blood crying louder than our ſins, and better things than our Prayers.

IV. We are to believe and improve this Truth, *viz.* That the Father exceedingly delights to honour Chriſt, and hereby God wonderfully honours Chriſt, by pardoning and receiving into favour ſuch rebellious ſinners as we are for his ſake, by forgiving any thing for his ſake. A ſinner cannot pleaſe God better, than by coming with confidence for pardon for his ſake. If we come for pardon or mercies, and our confidence ariſeth from our low thoughts of the number or ſinfulneſs of our ſins, or of Gods hatred of ſin, or our ability to ſatisfie Juſtice, or deſerve Mercy; our confidence is deſperate Impudence and Arrogance; but if purely from the high eſteem we have of the Incomprehenſibleneſs of Chriſts Satisfaction, and of Chriſts Intereſt of Gods Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour Chriſt: ſuch confidence is precious and acceptable with God; and whoſoever hath it, may go with as much freedom and aſſurance of favour, as if he had never ſinned; with as much

much as *Adam* in his Innocency, or the Angels in Glory. Alas we do not believe, or not improve theſe truths; for if we did, we might have any thing, for Chriſt hath Intereſt enough in God to bear us out, and procure any Mercy.

V. We are to believe, improve, and obey Chriſts Command, *viz.* in *John* 14. 13, 14, 16, 23. the former truths give us great hope, but this ſtrong Conſolation; for though ſuch a great perſon had never ſo much intereſt in ſome other great perſon with whom we had to do; yet without a Commiſſion from him, we might not go in his Name; but Chriſt hath not only given us leave, but a Command: and now it is not an arbitrary thing we may do or not do, but we muſt do. This is the Incomprehenſible Goodneſs of God, that what is for our good, he Commands us; that not only we may be put on the more to obtain what is good for us, but that it may be an act of obedience, and ſo we may be rewarded for procuring our own happineſs.

So much for the things we are to believe. Now for the manner of believing.

1. We are to believe theſe things of God and Chriſt with an Hiſtorical Faith.

2. With a Faith of Recumbency, we are to rely upon the Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, and upon Chriſts Intereſt in God, *&c.*

3. Saints are by way of Duty, but not by way of a neceſſary Condition of obtaining whatſoever they ask, to believe with the Faith of aſſurance of obtaining whatſoever we pray for. By Faith here in the Text is not meant, that we muſt without any doubt or wavering believe that we ſhall receive in kind whatſoever we ask, even the very thing we pray for.

1. The Leper was cured, though he prayed with an *if thou wilt.*

2. Thoſe in diſſertion ſhould put up no acceptable Prayers, ſince they have not Faith of aſſurance of obtaining.

3. Chriſt when he comes at the day of Judgment, he ſhall not find this Faith on the Earth, *Luke* 18. 8, and yet *ver.* 7, it is ſaid, God will hear thoſe Prayers.

4. The Apoſtle forbids this Faith, *verſ.* 7, therefore it is not the Faith here commanded, for then it ſhould run thus, You muſt believe you ſhall receive the thing you ask for; but if you do not, you muſt not. Many more arguments may be brought to prove this, but theſe ſhall ſuffice, beſides what ſhall be ſaid in the poſitive handling this Queſton, *viz.* *What Faith is required as to our believing abſolutely and undoubtedly in kind the very thing we ask*: which I ſhall anſwer in ſeveral Propoſitions.

I. When we ask temporal bleſſings as we ought, we are bound to believe we ſhall receive them as we ask them; for our Prayers for temporal things ſhould be ſpiritual as to the end, and moderate as to their meaſure, and conditional as to their effect upon us, *i. e.* if it be for our good. Now ſince our deſires are to be conditional, and Gods promiſes of temporals are conditional, we muſt not abſolutely believe we ſhall receive what we ask: a conditional promiſe cannot be a foundation for an abſolute Faith.

II. Our Faith and Confidence of obtaining the thing we ask, ſhould proceed *pari paſſu*, ſhould be as ſtrong to the event, as it is to the condidions. If

we are very confident what we ask is for the glory of God, or our good, we muſt be as confident that we ſhall have it; for as we are to put no Condition to abſolute promiſes, ſince God hath put none; ſo we are to add no more Conditions to Conditional promiſes than God hath put; and upon thoſe Conditions we are as fully to rely upon Gods performance, as upon his performance of abſolute promiſes.

III. Though we cannot, nor ought not certainly to believe the obtaining the thing we ask, if it be temporal, by vertue of the promiſe; yet by vertue of an immediate aſſurance God may give us of receiving the very thing we ask, we may, and indeed cannot chuſe but expect it. We read of Gods dealing ſo with ſeveral of his Saints (with Mr. *Fox*, and many others).

IV. As for ſpiritual bleſſings, they are of Four ſorts, 1. Of Edification, as gifts, ſuch as ſpeaking with Tongues, and Propheſying in the Primitive Church, and the gifts of Preaching and Praying now. Or,

2. Of Conſolation, as Aſſurance, and the Comforts of the Spirit, the Priviledges of the Kingdom of God, as Peace and Joy in believing.

3. Of Sanctification, as Grace and Glory. For the former, the ſame rules as belong to temporals, belong to theſe: but for ſaving Grace, as our Prayers ought not to be Conditional, ſince we are ſure it is for our good, and the glory of God, for us to be holy; ſo our Faith ought not to be conditional, but abſolute and particular, that God will give us Grace and Glory, if we ſincerely and fervently ask it.

4. Yet though I ſhould believe that God certainly will give Grace, nay, and all other things, if good for me; yet my not believing that God will give me Grace, doth not null mine intereſt in the promiſe, but only my comfort; nor ſhall it hinder Gods performance, though it hinders our expectation of receiving.

V. Though we are not abſolutely to believe we ſhall receive temporal bleſſings, or thoſe of Conſolation or Edification; yet that we do not more confidently expect the performance of ſuch Prayers in kind, proceeds generally from our not believing and improving the Power and Goodneſs of God, and the great Intereſt Chriſt hath in God, and the reſt that I have ſpoken of: for generally we are more confident that the thing we pray for is good for us, than we are that we ſhall have it.

VI. We may be confident that the reſtoring of our ſelves or our relations to health, or deliverance of them out of danger, is for our Good; as they in our Saviours time, who prayed to him for theſe mercies, were.

VII. As the caſe ſtands between Juſtifying Faith and Aſſurance, ſo the caſe ſtands as to our receiving, and our expecting the anſwer of our Prayers in kind.

1. As we may and ſhall have all the promiſes that are made to Faith, made good to us, though we do not believe that we have Faith, and by conſequence do not believe we ſhall have them made good to us: ſo when we pray for thoſe things God hath promiſed to thoſe who love or fear God, or walk uprightly, though we do not believe we have that fear or love, or that we walk uprightly; if we have thoſe Graces, we ſhall receive the promiſes made to them.

2. As

2. As there aretwo kinds of Aſſurance, one which comes from the Teſtimony of our own ſpirits, when, upon ſerious examination of our ſelves, we find that we do believe; the other, which comes from the Teſtimony of the Spirit of God, witneſſing with our ſpirits: So there are two kinds of Aſſurance, of receiving the thing we ask, one which proceeds from our believing, and improving our believing the Power and Goodneſs of God, and Chriſt's Intereſt in God, and God's delighting to honour Chriſt, by giving the Mercies we ask in his Name; the other from God's immediate aſſuring us, that we ſhall receive the very mercy we pray for.

3. As the immediate Teſtimony of the Spirit comes with more evidence than the Teſtimony of our own Spirits; ſo the immediate aſſurance that God gives, that we ſhall receive the things we pray for, is clearer and fuller than that which we have by our relying upon the Power and Goodneſs of God; or to ſpeak more properly, we do more fully rely upon the Goodneſs and Power of God, when God doth immediately enable us ſo to do, than when we work out this Confidence by our own endeavours, aſſiſted by the ordinary concurrence of the Spirit.

4. As it is not our ſin to want the immediate Teſtimony of the Spirit, ſo it is not our ſin not to have this particular aſſurance of receiving what we ask. Theſe Parallels may be far more enlarged, and will hold, as I think, in all particulars.

The Uſe of this is; 1. For Conſolation, to all that love and fear God; for thy not believing God will grant thy Prayers, ſhall not hinder thy Prayers from being accepted and granted; for although, if thine unbelief were built upon thy not believing God's Power or Goodneſs to do what thou prayeſt for, would hinder thee; yet ſince thy Diffidence proceeds from thy not believing, that thou art ſuch an one as the Promiſes are made to, ſuch thine unbelief ſhall not make the Promiſe of God of no effect, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. In the 11 and 12. *verſes*, the Apoſtle ſaith, *If we are dead with Chriſt* (not if we believe, we are dead with Chriſt) *we ſhall live: though we do not believe we are dead, if we are dead, it ſhall not hinder: for if we believe not, God is faithful*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. For ſuppoſe one dies, and leaves ſuch an one a Legacy, though he, to whom the Legacy is left, doth not know of any ſuch Legacy; yet the Executor will not therefore, not give him the Legacy; nay, though he will hardly believe it when he tells him, yet he will keep it and give it him; ſo the Legacies that Chriſt hath left to the Saints, though they little think any ſuch Legacies are left by Chriſt to them, yet their ignorance ſhall not fruſtrate Chriſts Love; nay, though they will not for the preſent extend their hand of Faith to receive it, yet God will, and doth keep Mercy for thouſands, until they will receive it, *Exod.* 34. 7.

II. The ſecond Uſe, is an Uſe of Exhortation. 1. Put in thy Claim for Mercy, for thy Claim will hold, not according to thy ſenſe, knowledg, or belief, that thou haſt an Intereſt, but according to the Truth of thine Intereſt. Suppoſe thou ſhouldeſt promiſe to give to every one of thy Children ſuch a gift, if they were good Children. Suppoſe one of your Children, who had obeyed your Commands, and had been very inquiſitive to know your

Will; I ſay, ſuppoſe ſuch a Child ſhould ſit weeping, becauſe he thought he had not obeyed your Commands, and becauſe he thought you were angry with him, and upon that account would not come for your promiſed gift; would you not therefore give it him? nay, would you not only be pleaſed with his obedience, but that he took ſo to heart your ſuppoſed anger? So, O poor Soul, that ſitteſt weeping with thine eyes full of tears, and thine heart full of ſorrow, under the ſenſe of Gods ſuppoſed diſpleaſure, ſhall not God *wipe all tears from thine eyes*, and give thee the Promiſes he hath made to thee, though thou, through the ſenſe of thy unworthineſs, doſt not believe thou haſt any intereſt in them?

2. The ſecond advice is, That thou ſhouldeſt endeavour to obtain the Graces to which the Promiſes are made, *viz. Fear and love of God, and uprightneſs of heart*, &c. whilſt others are examining, and going from Miniſter to Miniſter, to know whether they have thoſe Graces, be thou getting of them. For,

1. Thou ſhalt be ſure to get an Intereſt in the Promiſes, for they are made to ſuch as have the Graces, not to thoſe that know that they have thoſe Graces; and if thou haſt a Title, thou ſhalt have poſſeſſion.

2. By getting greater degrees of Graces, the trouble of Examination will be needleſs, it will ſave thee that labour, whereas otherwiſe thou wilt perpetually be put to Examination: As for inſtance; Thou findeſt a ſpark of fire, and covereſt it up again, and letteſt it lie wet, to morrow thou wilt be as far to ſeek, and wilt as hardly find the ſpark, and know whether there be any fire to morrow, as to day. Another knowing where to have fire cloſe by, knows ſhe can as ſoon fetch it from her Neighbour, as find it on her own Hearth; if there be but a ſpark or two, ſhe therefore fetches ſome, and blows up into a flame, and ſhe layes on fewel to keep in the fire; So thou knoweſt where thou mayeſt have Gods love, *viz.* from God, *who is near unto them that call upon him*, they know they may have it ſooner by Prayer, than find it by Examination; this they blow into a flame: And as when the fire flames, we may be ſure there is fire, without poring to find it; So when thy Graces are in an eminent degree, they are ſo apparent, that one that hath but half an eye may ſee them.

3. By getting the Conditions to which the Promiſe is made, thou ſhalt often get what is better than the Promiſe it ſelf; for the Promiſe is often Temporal, when the Condition is Spiritual.

III. Study much, or rather meditate much upon theſe great Goſpel-Myſteries of Chriſts Satisfaction, of Chriſts intereſt in the Fathers Love, and of the Fathers delight to honour the Son, by giving Mercies, and pardoning ſinners for his ſake. Know that thou greatly diſhonoureſt Chriſt, when thou goeſt timerouſly to God for any Mercy in his Name, and it greatly argues thine infidelity: Suppoſe thy Friend that was bound with thee for ſome great ſum of Money, and he hearing there were Sergeants to arreſt thee, ſhould put himſelf into their hands to ſave thee from Priſon, and he ſhould be carried to Priſon. and pay the Debt, and ſend thee word that he had paid the Debt every farthing; if thou ſhouldeſt notwithſtanding be afraid to ſee thy Creditor, or ſtir abroad, would it not argue that thou believedſt not thy Friend had paid the Debt?

IV. Go

IV. Go then with confidence to God, in the Name of Chriſt, ſince Chriſt hath bid thee, or elſe thou haſt ſtrange thoughts of Chriſt.

Suppoſe a Friend of yours ſhould bid you go to ſuch a great man for ſuch a Courteſie, and ſhould tell thee that he had ſpoken to him in thy behalf, and bid thee not fear, for he could have any thing of him that he ſpoke to him for; and ſhould bid thee go to him in his Name, and tell him he ſent thee; if thou ſhouldeſt ſtand conſidering what to do, and ſhouldeſt fear, that for all thy Friend profeſſed he had ſo great an Intereſt in that great man, you ſhould not find it ſo when you came to him; would not this ſhow, that you feared your Friend boaſted of more Intereſt than he had?

Chriſt hath plainly bid us go to the Father in his Name from him, and that we ſhall have any thing whatſoever: if we doubt whether when we go to the Father in his Name, we ſhall obtain; doth it not plainly argue our low thoughts of Chriſts Intereſt in the Fathers Love, and that Chriſt hath higher thoughts of his Intereſt in his Fathers Love than indeed he hath. The ſenſe of thine own unworthineſs ſhould by no means hinder thee, except thou wenteſt to God in thine own name: for the Queſtion in this Caſe, is not how God loves thee, but how God loves Chriſt? Thou haſt thoughts high enough of God's Love to Chriſt, if thou knoweſt that God loves Chriſt more than he hates any ſinner in the world. Thy thoughts are not high enough of Chriſts Love to thee, if thou thinkeſt Chriſt will deny thee any thing: nor haſt thou worthy thoughts of God's Love to Chriſt, if thou thinkeſt God will deny Chriſt any thing, or any one that comes to him in his Name, whom he bids ſo to do; for in ſo doing, he doth not ſo properly deny thee, as Chriſt

Of

Of the Cauſe of Inward Trouble: and how a Chriſtian ſhould behave himſelf when Inward and Outward Troubles meet.

Gen. XLII. *verſ.* 21, 22.

21. *And they ſaid one to another, (yea but) verily we are guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his Soul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us.*

22. *And* Reuben *anſwered them, ſaying, Spake I not to you, ſaying, Sin not againſt the Child, and ye would not hear? therefore behold alſo, his blood is required.*

IN this Chapter we have the Deſcription of our Fathers, the Patriarchs; their firſt Journey into *Egypt* for Corn, to relieve their Famine in *Canaan*.

Herein is conſiderable, 1. Their entertainment there; it was harſh, with much trouble, more danger; the great Lord-Treaſurer of *Egypt* would not know them, but treats them roughly, *verſ.* 7; takes them for Spies, *verſ.* 9; rejects their defence, *verſ.* 12; renews, and out of their own mouths re-inforceth his Charge and Suſpicion of them, *verſ.* 14; threatens to commit them, *verſ.* 15, 16: commits them, *verſ.* 17: puts Bonds upon one of them, till the reſt ſhould quit and clear themſelves and him of ſuſpition, *verſ.* 19, 20. This is their cold and ſad well-come and entertainment.

2. The conſequent of this their hard and diſtreſsful uſage and entreatment, and that is trouble of mind, horror and peplectity of ſpirit, *And they ſaid one to another*, &c.

The

The words then are the Holy Ghoſts report of the Caſe of the Sons of *Jacob*, their being ſpiritually troubled, by way of Conviction or Judgment in their own (which alſo is the Lords) Court of Conſcience.

Wherein we obſerve the

I. Actors { Regiſters, Accuſers, Witneſſes, Judg, Tormentors } themſelves.

II. Proceſs in judging themſelves; Wherein,

1. Self-accuſation of the cauſe of their trouble, their ſin, with the utmoſt aggravations, *viz.*

1. In general, *We are guilty.*
2. In particular, Of Envy, Wrong againſt a Brother; whom in bitterneſs we ſaw without pity, and were deaf to his intreaties; Obſtinate to the admonition of *Reuben*, and abiding therein.

2. In ſelf-condemnation, *Therefore is this diſtreſs come, and his blood required.*

III. Execution; Wherein,

1. The ſmart, by inward terror and conſternation, their heart miſgiving them, is deeply affected; and that makes them very abrupt, *Yea verily, i. e.* Alas! what ſhall we do?

2. The circumſtance of the time when couched in. And,

1. In general, Many years after the offence was done.
2. In ſpecial, Now that they were outwardly in an afflicted condition.

Doct. 1. *Every man hath a Conſcience within himſelf.*

2. *The guilt of ſin turns a mans Conſcience,* i. e. *himſelf againſt himſelf.*

3. *Conſcience is apt to be very ſenſible, when'tis awakened, not only of ſin, but particular ſins, and the particular circumſtances and degrees thereof to the utmoſt, and charge all upon a mans ſelf, not upon Gods Decrees or Providence, nor upon the Devil or evil company,* &c.

4. *Envy, unnatural affection, cruelty, deafneſs to the intreaties of the diſtreſſed, obſtinacy againſt Warning and Admonition, continuance in ſin without repentance,* &c. *are very hainous and dangerous.*

5. *The Accuſations and Condemnation of Conſcience are terrible, or cauſe terror beyond all expreſſion.*

6. *There is a time when God will call over ſins that are paſt, and charge them upon the Conſcience.*

7. *Inward trouble of mind, ſometimes, yea, uſually comes upon the People of God when they are outwardly in ſome diſtreſs.*

I ſhall ſpeak of the two laſt, and in them ſomething of all the other, ſaving the fourth, containing the particular matter of Fact, *viz.* Cruelty and Blood, which I ſhall not meddle withal.

Theſe are then the two Doctrines; 1. *There*

1. *There is a time when God will call over paſt ſins with horrour*, &c.
2. *This time of inward horrour falls in with outward trouble.*

Doct. 1. *There is a time when God will call over ſins that are paſt, without repentance, and charge them upon the Conſcience with horrour.*

Here's the Caſe; The Sons of *Jacob* had formerly treſpaſſed againſt God in the matter of their Brother, *And they ſaid*, &c. now, and not till now that we read of, is the guilt and horror of it reflected upon their Conſciences. In ſin, the *act* paſſes, the *guilt* and *conſequent* remains.

Sin is like ſome poyſon, which may be taken at one time, and work at another, it may be ſeven years after: 'Twas now more than ſeven, and ſeven years, that the poyſon of this ſin began to work.

'Tis true of { Family ſins, *Hoſ.* 1. 4. / National ſins, *Ezek.* 4. 4, 5. *Lam.* 5. 7. / Perſonal ſins, as here: And that's the Caſe.

1. Not only of the wicked, as in the Caſe of *Cain*, Gen. 4. 7, *If thou doſt ill, ſin lies at the door*, to ſhut out Mercies, and let in Judgments; and that as a fell Maſtiff, or a ſleeping Lyon, ready to take thee by the Throat, whenever the Lord awakens guilt in the Conſcience.

2. But alſo of the Godly, *Pſal.* 19. 12. & 25. 7. *Job* 13. 26, *Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth.*

Reaſ. 1. *Reaſ.* 1. From God.

1. God remembers all, *Amos* 8. 7. *As I live, ſaith the Lord, I will forget none of their works.* 1 Sam. 15. 2, *I remember what* Amaleck *did*, &c. God hath three Books;

1. Of *Preſcience*, wherein he writes down our Names, and his purpoſes concerning us. The *Arminians* deny that Book.

2. Of *Providence*, wherein he writes down our Names, and all his care over us. The Epicure and Atheiſt deny this, as alſo the former.

3. Of *Poſtſcience* or *remembrance*, wherein he writes down our Names, and all the particulars of our carriage towards him,

1. Whether they be good; no act of Piety or Charity, not a cup of cold water from the Spring of Love, not a drop of tears from the Spring of Godly ſorrow, not a ſigh from the bottom of a broken heart, but it's taken notice of, botled, recorded, *Mal.* 3. 16. Or,

2. Bad; not a wicked thought, a malicious ſcoff, or wicked action, word, motion, but God marks it, and ſets it down in the Book of his Remembrance, *Pſal.* 50. 21.

Reaſ. 2. 2. God need not reflect, or look back, for he hath all things preſent before him, that ever were, are, or are to come, *viz.*

1. In *Speculo decreti.*
2. In *Cauſis particularibus.*

Gods Knowledg, (called fore-knowledg, and remembrance, in reſpect of us, and the things known) is as his being, altogether in *puncto æternitatis.* There is not in God *firſt* and *ſecond* of time and cauſe; no *was* and

is

is to come, but all *is*. There is not with God beginning, ſucceſſion, and end, but his Name is *I am*, and ſo is knowledg as himſelf, *yeſterday, to-day, and the ſame for ever*, 2 Pet. 3. 8. The knowledg of men, is as of one ſtanding on the ſhore, where ſome Ships are paſt, and out of ſight one way, others to come, and out of ſight another way, others in ſight right over rgainſt him; but the Knowledg of God, is of one on the top of an high Mountain, where with one view, *all things are preſent*, Heb. 4. 13.

3. God alſo ſeals up our iniquities, as in a bag, *Job* 14. 17, as the Clerk of the Sizes ſeals up the Indictments for the next Circuit; nay God himſelf will bag them, and ſeal them up with his own hand and ſignet. *Deut.* 32. 34. God ſpeaking of the Provocations of his People, ſaith, *Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed among my treaſure?* So ſtrict and earneſt is God for ſecurity, as we ſay, *Sure bind, ſure find.* What more ſure and ſafe, than that which God himſelf lays up in Bag and Cabinet, and Seals among his Jewels? As when God makes up his Jewels of Mercy, he will remember them, *Mal.* 3. 17. So when he caſts up his Treaſures of Wrath, he will remember them. *Reaſ.* 3.

4. God's Truth engages him in this caſe, his Word cannot paſs away, now he hath ſaid it, *Exod.* 24. 7. He will by no means acquit the guilty, (*i. e.* unleſs the blood of ſprinkling, for repentance and remiſſion be applied) it's ſaid again, *Pſal.* 68. 21, I will wound the head; and again, *Iſa.* 65. 20, *The ſinner an hundred years old is accurſed.* *Reaſ.* 4.

Now as the godly look to have God as good as his word for good; ſo the wicked muſt look to have God, as good as his word for evil: *Did not my word take hold of your Fathers?* Zach. 1. 6.

5. No time can remit Gods anger; if you offend a man, and he be angry, you may get out of the way, and time will wear off the memory of the offence, or at leaſt aſſwage his paſſion; but 'tis not ſo with God: for if he be once angry, he is for ever angry; the ſame cauſe, which is ſin unrepented, remaining. *Pſal.* 7. 11, *God is angry with the wicked every day*, for the ſins he commits one day; the anger of the Lord, unleſs he works a change in us, abides upon us, burning to the bottom of Hell, *Pſal.* 90. 11, *O! as his fear is, ſo is his wrath*, and a thouſand times more. *Reaſ.* 5.

6. Laſtly, The ſinner is as much under the Power of God at one time, as at another, forty, a hundred, a thouſand years after a ſin is committed, as when the ſin was firſt done. *Reaſ.* 6.

As the People of God are born up with that word, *Behold the hand of the Lord is not ſhortned, that he cannot ſave*, Iſa. 59. 1. So the wicked ſink under the terror of that word, *Ezek.* 22. 14, *Can thy heart hold, and thine hands be ſtrong when I ſhall viſit, when I ſhall deal with you?* ſaith the Lord.

This is the firſt Reaſon from God.

Reaſ. 2. From ſin. In a two-fold conſideration of every ſin, wherein there are two things which make ſin unrepented, ſure to be called back.

1. There is in every ſin a breach of the eternal Rule of Righteouſneſs. *Reaſ.* 1.

neſs. 1 *John* 3. 4. Now the breach of an Eternal Law, muſt needs be Eternal, unleſs he which is Eternal, make it up (*i. e.* Chriſt in giving Repentance and Remiſſion): make a breach in a ſtone-wall, you may come many years after, and find it as you left it, and it muſt hold as long as the Wall holds, if it be not made up; even ſo it is in this caſe. Let one come from the dead and warn us, thoſe poor curſed Caſtaways are ſtill, and muſt be ſtill, and ever crying out under the Wrath of God. What is the reaſon, I pray? Verily, not only becauſe they ſinned out of an affection and ſpring to ſin for ever; but alſo, becauſe every ſin is objectively infinite and eternal, being againſt the Infinite Eternal Law of the Eternal God; now the Law being wronged by the ſinner, demands and ſolicites the Juſtice and Vengeance of God againſt him, till it be ſatisfied to the utmoſt farthing; therefore till then (*i. e.* for ever) muſt the wrath of God abide upon him; and if time wears not out the breach of the Eternal Law in Hell, much leſs doth it make any alteration therein here, while thou doubleſt and trebleſt thy ſin, by going on with an impenitent heart.

Reaſ. 2. 2. There is alſo in every ſin, a ſpot, ſtain, or brand, whereby the ſinner is marked out for Judgment and Condemnation; as we ſay of a Murtherer, as to man, ſo we may ſay of every ſin (which is hatred, and ſo murther of the Bleſſed God) as to God, there is always ſome mark or token whereby he is known; and that is the *macula* which ſin doth impreſs upon him; now this alſo is an indelible Character, as the former of guilt was, (ſave only, when upon the penitent heart changed by application of the blood of ſprinkling, there is made an alteration of the caſe). It is plain, *Jer.* 17. 1, *It is written with a pen of Iron, and the point of a Diamond.* Jer. 2. 22. *Though thou take thee much Nitre, and waſh thee with much Sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, ſaith the Lord.* David cries out ſo, *Pſal.* 51. *O! waſh me, purge me!* &c. This is the ſecond reaſon, from ſin.

Deut. 32. 5. Jer. 13. 23. Jer. 17. 1.

The third is from the ſinner himſelf, *i. e.* from his own Conſcience.

There is in every rational Creature, a certain thing called *Conſcience*; upon the account of which alſo, ſin muſt needs be kept upon the File for a back-blow. Know here, that

There are divers acts of Conſcience, and all of them unavoidable.

1. *Directive*, as to that which is to be done, it being the Law written in the heart, it points to all the duties and ſins whereby that Law is kept or broken; warning from the one, and putting on to the other. *Gen.* 39. 9, *How ſhall I do this, and ſin? &c.* Pſal. 119. 59, *I conſidered my wayes, and turned my feet into thy teſtimonies.* Thus Conſcience is a Monitor.

2. *Reflexive*, both *gratulatory* and *reprehenſive*, as to all that which is doing, or done.

1. Conſidering, obſerving, and recording, whether it be done or no; the matter of fact ſimply, with the natural circumſtances of action, Negative and Poſi-

Poſitive, both in the point of Omiſſion and Commiſſion. *Item*, this is done, or not done.

2. Taking notice, and recording the quality of the Fact in a comparative act; comparing it with the Rule, together with the moral circumſtances thereof: Thus Conſcience is a Surveyor, Witneſs, Regiſter. *Item*, In the doing or omitting of this, and this, the Law is broken, and the forfeiture and penalty is incurred.

3. It applies this, and ſets it home upon the ſinner, Thou art the Man. This thou haſt done, verily thou art guilty, *&c.* Thus Conſcience is a Judg alſo, and gives Sentence touching both the ſin and ſinner, *pro* or *con*, as the caſe is.

4. It never leaves, nor gives over theſe acts of warning, obſerving, recording, witneſſing and judging, till Judgment take place, and the Law and Sentence be fulfilled upon the ſinner. Verily, I am guilty, *&c.* Thus Conſcience is Tormentor and Executioner alſo, executing its own Sentence by affecting the heart, and moving the affections, as of joy and boldneſs, if the caſe be good; ſo of horrour and fear, ſhame and ſorrow, if the caſe be bad, *&c.*

Now theſe acts of Conſcience, though haply for a time ſuſpended, as it were, are unavoidable upon a double account: and Conſcience cannot be bribed,

1. Becauſe of that relation that Conſcience hath to God; it ever takes God's part, and God its; it is God's Deputy, and Viceroy; and ſo its Voice and Judgment is the very Voice and Judgment of God himſelf; who can and will maintain it in its office, till he brings forth Judgment unto Victory.

2. Becauſe of its relation to a mans ſelf; it is, *Senſus & præjudicium Judici Divini*. Nothing ſo intimate to a man, and inſeparable from life, as this Boſom-Judg, and God's Court within a man; 'tis a part of a mans ſoul and ſelf, as ſubordinate to God and his Judgment; So that if a man can run away from God, or himſelf, then he may eſcape the reflection of his ſin upon him; but if not, then know, it muſt be an evil and bitter thing, that thou haſt departed from God in any known ſin, either to thy penitent amendment, or penal condemnation and confuſion, and that upon all accounts. 1. In reſpect of God. 2. Of Sin. 3. Of the Sinner himſelf. *Jer.* 2. 19, *Thine own wickedneſs ſhall reprove thee, thine own iniquity ſhall correct thee:* All the time thou abideſt in ſin, thou art gathering either Hemlock to poyſon thee, or Wormwood to make thy life bitter. Jer. 2. 19.

1. Inſtruction: 1. See the malignity and danger of ſin. Fools make a mock of ſin.

2. See the vanity, and ſinfulneſs, and deſperate danger of preſuming upon any bottom of peace and ſatisfaction, or ſecurity, whilſt ſin remains: Of a truth, thy peace and hope thereof, ſhall be as a Spiders Web, and as the giving up of the Ghoſt; and thy preſumption muſt end in deſpair. Bribeſt thou thy ſelf with a perſwaſion of peace, preſuming and leaning

1. Upon Gods patience? Remember, forbearance is no payment, or forgiveneſs, nor ſign thereof.

2. Upon outward Priviledges? *Matth.* 7. 21. God knows thee not, whilſt thou art a worker of iniquity.

3. Upon the Mercy of God? He is Holy, and therefore muſt be Juſt; and becauſe juſt, angry; and becauſe angry, ever angry, unleſs Chriſt be thy Peace upon Faith and a through-change.

4. The blood of Chriſt? though it be an Ocean, yet not a drop of it can do thee good, unleſs it turn thee from all thine iniquity, *Acts* 3.21. all this is but Phyſick in thy Pocket.

5. The Promiſes of the Goſpel? They are ſweet, but Poyſon to the impenitent? as Bread to a dying man.

6. Upon thy Faith in all this? whilſt impenitent, all's but notional and imaginary, and ſo thy peace and happineſs is but a notion.

Uſe 2. 2. Therefore be exhorted to get thy ſin off.

I ſhall here do two things, 1. Give you ſome directions how to put you in the way to eſcape this doom. 2. To awaken my ſelf and you to the ſerious uſe of them by ſome Motives.

1. Then if you ask how? I anſwer,

Direct. 1. 1. Attend to, and comply with the Word and Spirit therein, in ſummoning thy ſelf to God's and thine own Bar of Conſcience; ſuffer thy ſelf to be ſtopt, as a looſe and ſculking Malefactor; ſeize and ſequeſter thy ſelf to hearken to the Call and Treaty of the Word about thy condtion; the *Hue and Cry* of the word is after thee to apprehend thee.

Direct. 2. 2. Let inquiſition and diligent ſearch be made into the matters between God and thy Soul; This is the way, *Lam.* 3. 20, *Let us ſearch our wayes, and turn*, &c. This is the miſcarriage, *Jer.* 8. 6. *No man conſidered, and ſaid, What have I done?* The firſt ſtep to Peace with God, is Enquiry, *Iſa.* 21. 12, *If ye will enquire, Enquire, Return, Come.*

Direct. 3. 3. Declare againſt thy ſelf, turn God's faithful Pleader againſt thy own Soul; accuſe thy ſelf in free and particular confeſſion, whereof thou art guilty, with all the killing Circumſtances thou canſt find out. This will prevent the Accuſer of the Brethren.

Direct. 4. 4. Condemn thy ſelf, charge thy ſelf with Fault, Guilt, Puniſhment, *Lev.* 26. 41, *So ſhalt thou prevent the Condemnation of the Lord:* though
1 Cor. 11. 31. thou canſt not ſatisfie the Juſtice of God in the leaſt, yet thou muſt glorifie it to the utmoſt thou canſt.

Direct. 5. 5. Be thorow, and to purpoſe, and conſtant herein: for if thy ſenſe of thy condition be not real, thy cure will not be real; there will be no more reality in the Application of the Word for the one, than there is for the other; to no more purpoſe wilt thou apply the Word to thy ſelf, than thou applieſt thy ſelf to the word; therefore give thy ſelf to it, to dwell upon thy Caſe; hold the Object cloſe to the Faculty, till it make ſome impreſſion, and thy heart yield.

Direct. 6. 6. Fly to the Lord Jeſus, and the Mercy-ſeat in his Blood, 1. For Repentance. 2. For remiſſion. He is exalted to give both, *Acts* 5. 31.

None

None can take up the quarrel between God and thee, ſave only Chriſt alone; he, he is the Way; God's way to thee for Grace and Mercy, and thy way to God for Faith. Lord, I am a guilty helpleſs Creature, but thou haſt laid help upon one that is mighty to ſave, from the utmoſt to the utmoſt. 1 Sam. 2. 25.

7. In him therefore cry to God for Mercy and Grace with thy whole heart, O mercy, mercy Lord; I have wronged thee, Lord forgive me; I have defiled my Soul, Lord waſh me; I have wounded and caſt away my Soul, Lord heal me, Lord ſave me, *&c.* *Direct.* 7. Pſal. 51.

8. Cry for mercy, till God have mercy upon thee, *Pſal.* 123. 2. 3, Take heed thou be not temporary for a fit, but ſet thy ſelf in an habitual tenour, reſtleſs after Intereſt in Chriſt, and the great Work, till it be done. *Direct.* 8.

9. Accept of Chriſt upon the terms of the Goſpel, not thine own, or picking and chuſing, but as he; *Lord, what wouldſt thou have me to do?* Conſent and reſign thy ſelf, ſtooping to his Articles of Peace; to deny thy ſelf of the deareſt, bear the heavieſt, do the ſtrickeſt, as he ſhall call; not that thou canſt do any thing, but upon theſe terms; If he will receive thee, and furniſh thee with Grace, thou wilt follow, and cleave to him with full purpoſe of heart. *Direct.* 9. Acts 9. 6.

10. Caſhier and diſcharge in thy purpoſe, and endeavour in dependance on this Chriſt in the Promiſe, whatever thou knoweſt offends in heart and life, whatever belongs to a carnal mind, which is enmity to God, and addict thy ſelf to the pleaſure of God in all known commands, and whatever favours of the Spirit, and the Kingdom of God. *Direct.* 10.

11. Upon theſe terms, conſenting to imbrace Chriſt in the offer of Grace, reſt upon Chriſt, who is aſſuredly thine, and will never be otherwiſe. *Direct.* 11.

2. The Motives. 1. The comfort of this way. 1. *Now then there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt*, &c. *their iniquities ſhall never be remembred*; God ſees no iniquity in *Jacob*, there's no fury in God. *O! bleſſed is the man to whom God imputes not his ſin*, &c. Now Chriſt is *Jehovah*, thy Righteouſneſs. Thy Judg is thy Advocate, thy God reconciled. Thy Comforter is come to apply Chriſt in all that he is for thee, to thee, and ſhall abide for ever with thee; he is thy Seal unto the purchaſed Poſſeſſion, the Law is ſatisfied, the Curſe is removed, all the Promiſes thine, and the Spirit of Promiſe to confirm thy title, thine; the ſtain or mark of ſin waſhed off quite, as to Juſtification and preſent Acceptation, and in part begun as to Sanctification and purity of heart and life. Thy Conſcience is pacified with *the blood of ſprinkling*, as to what the Word declares concerning thee, though not as to what thou feeleſt; and where the Judg acquits, there Conſcience, which is the Sergeant, cannot condemn; but that 'tis not always ſet right according to the Word. *Motive* 1. Rom. 8. 1. Pſal. 32.

2. But oh! the terror of having ſin upon the file againſt us; and doſt thou remain in ſin unrepented? Doſt thou go on to add ſin to ſin, not *Motive* 2. The terror of being yet, and going on in ſin.

not caring how many ſins thou loadeſt thy Conſcience withal, as if there were no time of reckoning? Numb. 32.23, *Be ye ſure your ſins will find you out.*

Sic mihi ſemper contingat tractare & legere amicos, non dulcibus verbis ſed ſanis terroribus. Bern.

Do not ſay, *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* Or as the wicked one, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* But as thou loveſt thy Soul, take all I ſay in good part, for God knows I ſpeak out of tender reſpect to your eternal good. Conſider then,

1. The innumerable number of ſins thou ſtandeſt guilty of, *Pſal.* 19.12, *Who knows the errors of his life?* Methinks there is no ſad ſight in the World, but the ſinner in his ſins.

Suppoſe you had ſeen *Herod* covered over with Worms; alas what is this to one Worm of Conſcience?

Suppoſe you had ſeen every Member in the Senate run upon *Cæſar* to give him a ſtab, would not you have given him over for dead a thouſand times? Brethren, every ſin you commit, is an invenomed Knife to ſtab you at your very heart.

Suppoſe, again, you ſhould ſee a Malefactor at the Bar for a Capital Crime, the Evidence clear, O! you will ſay, 'Twil go hard with him; but when you ſee another, and another, and many other Indictments ſworn home againſt him, and every one touching his life, will you not ſay, There is no hope, he is a dead man, and all the World cannot ſave him? Remember, this is thy caſe, and it will be certainly called over.

If one Poyſon be enough to diſpatch a man without an Antidote, what doth that man mean, that drinks off a thouſand Poyſons, and refuſes the Antidote of the Blood of Chriſt?

If one ſin be as a thouſand Mill-ſtones to ſink all the World into the bottom of Hell, what doſt thou mean to tie ſo many thouſand Mill-ſtones about thy own neck?

2. Old Debts vex moſt; the delay of payment increaſes them by Uſe upon Uſe; and the return of them being unexpected, a perſon is leaſt provided for them. We count old Sores, breaking forth, incurable. *Auguſtus* wondered at a perſon ſleeping quietly that was very much in debt, and ſent for his Pillow, ſaying, *Surely there is ſome ſtrange vertue in it, that makes him reſt ſo ſecure.* My Brethren, if one Debt unto Gods Law be more than the whole Creation can ſatisfie, what do any of us mean to reſt ſecure with ſo vaſt a burden upon our Conſciences and accounts? O! take heed thou beeſt not ſurprized and arreſted with old Debts. O! *thou remembreſt former iniquities againſt us.*

Pſal. 79. 8.

3. God will call over, and charge thy ſins upon thee, when all the ſweet is gone; Thou makeſt a ſhift to ſwallow the Hook with pleaſure, when 'tis covered with the ſweet Bait; O! but when that's digeſted, or diſgorged, and the naked Hook piercing and raking thy heart, what wilt thou do then? O! how bitter is the Pill when all the Sugar is melted off. Now this will be thy caſe; *Job* found but a taſte of it, and O! how he cries out, *Job* 13. 26, *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me,* i. e. *bitterneſſes.*

4. With

4. With old ſins muſt come old wrath, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5, *Thinkeſt thou that thou ſhalt eſcape the judgment of God? What, and deſpiſeſt the riches of his goodneſs and forbearance, not knowing that the goodneſs of God* (doth not not only give thee a ſpace of, but) *leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt* (tunneſt) *up againſt thy ſelf, wrath againſt the day of wrath*, &c.

There be three ſorts and degrees of Wrath will come with old ſins.

1. Wrath for old ſins.
2. Wrath for the forbearance of that Wrath.
3. Wrath for the abuſe of that forbearance: O! what wilt thou do in the day of thy viſitation?

5. The former admonitions, *&c.* nips of Conſcience will come again, and they with the preſent will be unſufferable, beyond all that can be expreſſed: This is their terror here, ſay they, *He beſought us, and we would not hear*; and ſaith *Reuben, Said I not to you*, did I not tell you, warn you what it would come to, and ye would not hear? O! he which hardens his neck to reproof, ſhall ſurely be deſtroyed. O! timely and fair checks and warnings obſtinately rejected, are the wracks of Conſcience, the ſharp ſting and teeth of the Worm thereof.

6. And what will now become of thee! as the Lord lives, thou wilt come to thy diſtracting, miſgiving thoughts; *Yea, but, and verily we are guilty*, &c. Methinks, ſaith *Luther*, every cloud is lin'd with thunder againſt me: Thou wilt take every viſitation from God, as a Meſſenger of Death; nay, that God himſelf ſets in againſt thy life. Suppoſe you ſaw two deſperate enemies grapling, cloſing in upon each other; O! ſay you, they are armed with ſome inſtruments of death, they owe each other a deadly grudg; there is of old a mortal feud between them, they'l take this opportunity to vent their malice to the utmoſt: O! one of them will fall and die for it. My Brethren, God and the ſinner in his ſins, are according to the tenour of this Book, enemies, hated of, and hating one another; and when God viſits ſin upon him, he falls upon him, and deals with him (as I may ſay) hand to hand, and now one of them muſt go to the Walls, God or the ſinner muſt fall: Take it in Gods own Challenge, *Ezek.* 21. 14. In *verſ.* 13, God complains the ſinner had given him a blow; but then, ſaith God, Canſt thou indeed make thy part good when I ſhall be in good earneſt with thee? *Can thy heart hold out? can thy hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee?* O! conſider and tremble at it, how God will thus deal with thee, and how infinitely, thou being a guilty worm, art over-matcht by Omnipotency, whoſe wrath will one day wax hot againſt thee, even to the utmoſt, *Pſal.* 39. 11, O! ſaith *David, When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty*, even all his hopes and deſires, *to conſume away as a moth*, &c.

Sad was the caſe of the Children of *Benjamin*, of whom we read, *Judg.* 20. they had fought againſt their Brethren twice, and prevailed; they ventured out the third time; but when the Battel went againſt them, the Ambuſcadoes

Ambuſcadoes cut them off, and others fired the Town behind them; O! the horror and amazement they were ſtruck withall, when they could not ſtand before the face of the Tribes which were before them, and they ſaw their City all on a flame behind them; O! ſaid they, *Now is evil befallen us, and they were trodden down as dirt.* Thou wretch, which art ſtill in thy ſins, haſt fought againſt God many and many times, and ſeemed to carry the day; but when God ſhall come upon thee in his ſtrength, and thou ſhalt ſee all the refuge of Creature-Comforts in deſpairing caſe, as on a fire behind thee, what reprobate-aſtoniſhment will then take hold on thee? now comes thy diſtracting, miſgiving, deſpairing thoughts! now evil is befallen me! now is God come upon me, and will make an end of me at once! now come the floods of my ungodlineſs in amain, and the flood-gates of Gods wrath are opened upon me; *Now the Arrows of the Almighty ſtick faſt in me, and the poiſon thereof drink up my ſpirit, and the terrors of God ſet themſelves in array againſt me,* Job 6. 4. and as the Church, *Lam.* 2. 22. Now hath God ſummoned (and muſtered) as in a ſolemn day of battel between him and my poor ſoul, my terrors round about me! O! you that have been twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years, even ever ſince you were born, a provocation, and yet alſo *forget God: Conſider theſe things before he fall upon you, and tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*; for aſſure your ſelves, there is a time when God will call over ſins paſt, and charge them home upon the Conſcience.

Pſal. 50. 22.

Queſt. Q. But you will ask, *What is the ſign, and when ſhall theſe thing be?*

Anſw. Deut. 32. *A.* I anſwer: The God of Spirits can at any time, and will in his own time certainly fall upon thy Spirit with horror and confuſion; eſpecially and uſually at theſe particular Inſtants:

1. After a certain term of Patience abuſed and expired. God is patient toward all men and this patience is as the banks which keep in his wrath, that it breaks not in upon thee: but 'twill not be always ſo; theſe banks have their bounds; and as thy ſin abides, it riſes with thee; and as Gods wrath abides on thee it riſes with God, till at laſt it ſweels up to the bank of his patience, and then it is a thouſand times more dreadful than the Sea to overwhelm thee. Gods Patience and thy reſpite hath its date, *Gen.* 6. 3, one hundred and twenty years, and then——So it may be ſo many years, or months, or weeks, or days to thee, and then ——*Laſa patientia fit furor*; and as Lead, the colder, when Cold, the hotter when Hot.

Tarditatem vindictiæ compenſat gravitate ſupplici. Amos 6. 3. Matt. 24. 48, 50.

2. When the ſinner is ſecure; the leſs fear the more danger; the more thou putteſt the evil day from thee, the nearer it is to thee, God ſhall cut thee off in an hour when thou art not aware; when thou ſayeſt, *My Maſter delays his coming.* As the Flood came upon the old World, as * ſome ſay in the Spring, or Summer, when they would leaſt have dreamed of it. God deals with a ſinner, as *Samuel* with *Agag*; when he ſaid, *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*, then comes the meſſenger of death from the Lord to cut him in pieces, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3, *When the wicked cry Peace,*

* Muſculus *in* Gen. 1 Sam. 1. 32, 33. Deut. 29. 19.

Peace, (nothing but peace) *then cometh ſudden deſtruction upon them, as travel upon a woman,* &c. Doſt thou bleſs thy ſelf in thy ſins, as if thy condition were good, or thy account far off? *as the Lord lives, there is but a ſtep between thee and death.*

3. After the commiſſion of ſome great ſin; this like ſome great blow, which awakens the Conſcience to ſee the whole account; as in *Cain, Judas,* &c. God deals with the ſinner, as *Solomon* with *Shimei:* he reviled his Father *David,* but *David* ſeems to forget it, and ſo did his Son *Solomon,* only he is bound by an Oath not to go out of *Jeruſalem*; he breaks his Oath and goes out, *Solomon* upon this comes upon him for the breach of his Covenant and Oath; and alſo for former Rebellions, *And I remember,* ſaith he, *what thou didſt to my Father David.* 1 King. 2. 44.

4. On thy death-bead (not to ſpeak of Judgment when we muſt account for every particular) God comes to the ſinner (as to *Adam* in the cool of the day) in his cold ſweat, when his Sun is ſetting, and he is going to make his bed in the dark; his Life and Soul ſits on his pale trembling lips, ready to take her flight into Eternity; and whereas thou wert before as the *deaf Adder,* or the *wild Aſs ſnuffing up the wind,* or the *Dromedary traverſing his way,* without all regard of any check, now, taken in thy month; Oh! my contempt of the means of Grace; Oh! my prophaning Sabbaths, Sacraments; Oh! my breaking bonds of Oaths, Covenants, Promiſes, and caſting away Cords of Diſcipline and Government; Oh! my malice againſt Gods People; Oh! my hardening my heart againſt the Word and the Rod, *&c.* as the rankling thorn in the fleſh pains moſt when thou goeſt to bed. Gen. 3. 8.

5. Before this, in a time of outward Calamity and Diſtreſs, and this is the ſecond Doctrine from the ſpecial Circumſtance, when they were troubled, *And now.*

2. This inward horror and trouble of mind falls in (even to Gods People) with outward Trouble. *Direct.* 2.

This is the Caſe here, the Patriarchs (the Children of the Promiſe) are in diſtreſs and danger, by their Brother *Joſeph's* ſeeming ſeverity toward them. *And they ſaid one to another, We are verily guilty,* &c. with the preſſure on the outward man, comes a ſnare upon the Conſcience.

If any find it otherwiſe, (as there are ſome, with whom, when there is a ſtorm without, there is a calm within; and when a ſtorm within, there is a calm without) let them bleſs God: but in the experience of Gods People, it is often found, that when their outward condition is troubled, their inward ſtate and frame is full of perplexities and fears.

David found it ſo, *Pſal.* 116. 3, *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me,* and (then alſo) *the pains of hell got hold on me: I found trouble and ſorrow, i. e.* very much perplexity both inward and outward at once. So again, *Pſal.* 31. 22, *In my haſte* (i. e. when I was flying for my life before the face of *Saul,* and hard put to it) *then I ſaid, I am cut off from before thine eye.* Thus it was with *Jonah,* chap. 2. 4. in the depth of his diſtreſs, 1 Sam. 23. 26. Pſal. 42 7.

ſaith he, *I am caſt out of thy ſight*; ſad concluſions! touching not only Gods providential care over them, but his love towards them. Thus with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 5, *without were fightings, within were fears*, i. e. Spiritual conflicts.

We find the whole Church in the *Lamentations* at the ſame paſs, *Lam.* 3. 17, 18, *Thou haſt removed my Soul far from Peace; I ſaid, my ſtrength and my hope is periſhed from the Lord:* alike ſad is that Swoon of *Iſrael's* Faith, when they were in the Captivity, *Ezek.* 37. 11.

You'l ask what the reaſon and cauſe of this ſhould be?

Reaſ. 1. 1. It ariſeth from their ignorance, eſpecially in the fundamental Points of Religion, as touching our diſeaſe, and the remedy, and way of cure, the tenour of the Covenant of Grace, according to which God exactly proceeds in all his dealings with us; and we ſhould ever carry it towards God. If a man be taken with a fit of ſickneſs, knows not what he ails, nor what to take, nor how to apply that which is preſcribed, nor how to order himſelf; is unſatisfied touching the way, skill and faithfulneſs of his Phyſitian; by his ignorance he is put to a ſad plunge, and at his wits ends, ready to ſink and welter; thus 'tis in our Spiritual condition: *David*, Pſal. 73. 12, 16, is dangerouſly toſſed in his Spirit upon waves of temptations, and much ſtaggered about his condition; his feet were almoſt gone, he almoſt wrackt and caſt away. See the reaſon, *Pſal.* 73. 22, *So fooliſh was I, and ignorant:* ignorance is darkneſs, 'twill either find fears, or make them.

Reaſ. 2. Luk. 15. 12, 13. 2. This ariſeth from the ill and imprudent carnal management of a more proſperous ſtate; 'tis rare to receive much of this World, and not as the Prodigal to go afar off; 'tis hard to keep cloſe to God in proſperity, when we have much of this World to live upon, and content our ſelves with; to live upon God, and make him our content and ſtay, as if we had no other life nor livelihood but in him; we are very apt in ſuch a caſe to contract a carnal frame, let go our hold of God, diſcuſtom our ſelves to the exerciſe of Faith, abate and eſtrange our affections from God. See how it was with *David*, Pſal. 30. 7, *I ſaid I ſhould never be moved, thou haſt made my mountain ſo ſtrong.* I ſolaced my ſelf in theſe outward accommodations, as if I needed no other ſupport, ſtrength, or content, and there were no fear of a change; no care now to make God my conſtant joy and ſtay, and reckon upon God only for my portion, and that I muſt follow him with a Croſs, and be conformed to my Saviour, in being crucified to the World; what comes of this? *ver.* 7, *Thou hideſt thy face, and I was troubled*, viz. becauſe he had too much indulged a life of ſenſe. Children that are held up by their Nurſes hand, and mind not to feel their feet and ground, when the Nurſes let them go, they fall, as if they had no feet or ground to ſtand upon. Or thus: we are like Children, which playing in the golden Sun-ſhine, and following their ſport, ſtray ſo far from their Fathers houſe, that night coming upon them ere they are aware, they are as it were loſt, and full of fears, not knowing how to recover home; the World ſteals away our hearts from God, gives ſo few opportunities for

for the exerciſe of the life of faith, and ſuch advantages to a life of ſenſe, wears off the ſenſe of our dependance on God, and need thereof; ſo that when we are put to it by affliction, we are ready to miſcarry, ere we can recover our weapon, or hold. Faith is our Cordial, *Pſal.*27.13. Now if it be not at hand (as in health, when we have no need of it, it uſe to be) we may faint ere we recover the uſe of it.

3. It ariſeth from the ſhortneſs and dimneſs of our ſpiritual Evidences. 3. Our Evidences you know are great matters in point of eſtate and livelyhood, and in affliction we are put to prove them; at which time, if they be either not clear, or not at hand, we are at a great loſs and plunge. A good man makes always Conſcience of *making his calling and election ſure*; but he is eſpecially put upon this work in affliction; then he conſiders, then ſearches more than in his ordinary courſe. Afflictions are as ſharp, ſearching, winter-weather, will ſearch whether your houſe be tight or no; thoſe garments, walls and windows, that will ſerve in ſummer of proſperity, will be found defective in winter of adverſity; then how ſtands the caſe between God and me? what ground of my confidence? what evidence that I am in Chriſt, *&c*? Though the leaſt degree of Faith will ſave the houſe from falling, yet 'twill be a poor cold uncomfortable dwelling in winter, unleſs you mend the cracks and flaws, to defend you againſt driving piercing winds and ſtorms.

4. It ariſeth as it did here, from the remembrance of ſome ſin unmortified, 4. and therefore it may be, for ought we know, unpardoned. Affliction puts upon the remembrance of ſin with more circumſtances and aggravations, and to more purpoſe than ordinarily; even the beſt (which make moſt conſcience hereof) attend to it in time of freedom. *Job* 36.8,9,10, *If they be bound in fetters, and held in the cords of affliction, then he ſhews them their work, and their tranſgreſſions wherein they have exceeded,* 1 King. 17. 18, *Doſt thou come to call my ſin to remembrance in ſlaying* (afflicting me with the loſs of) *my ſon?*

In ſtormy change of Weather, when Clouds gather black over us, and it begins to drop, then we feel it in our bones, what bruiſes or aches we have gotten. When a man is arreſted by one Creditor, all his Debts come in upon him. Even ſo, when a man is arreſted with ſickneſs, or ſome other outward diſtreſs, then come in upon him the Debts wherein he is bound over unto the Divine Law: when all is well with us, we can eaſily caſt theſe Debts on the ſcore of Chriſt; but now 'tis hot work. Affliction is the Glaſs of Sin, and the opening and awakening the Conſcience to ſee it; and thence comes the Trouble upon the Spirit. It is not all the ſtormy Winds upon the face of the Earth, but ſome generated in the bowels thereof, which makes the Earth ſhake.

5. It ariſeth from Satan. When the eye of Conſcience is moſt open, 5. he is moſt buſie to preſent, either that which may cloſe it, or that which may trouble it; when the heart is moſt tender, he is moſt ready to bruiſe and wound it. In affliction he would make breaches between God and us, us and God, and us and our ſelves (if we muſt needs be ſenſible of

them) gulphs out of which there is no redemption; he tempts us unto ſin in proſperity, and then for ſin in adverſity; as we find in *Jobs* Caſe, even in thoſe which he knows are out of his reach where leaſt ſtrength and ground to do any thing, there he is moſt malicious, as it appears in his bold attempts upon our Lord: If he cannot run thee upon a Rock, yet he will diſquiet thee with a Tempeſt; if he cannot rob thee of thy Grace, yet he will of thy Peace and Comfort.

Reaſ. 6. 6. It ariſeth from the weakneſs of Faith, and ſtrength of Senſe, apprehending God in affliction as our enemy, eſpecially if there be ſome willing correſpondence between us and any thing which God hates, God is a terror to us. Thus Senſe wrought in *Job* 33. 10, *Behold, he findeth occaſion againſt me, he counteth me for his enemy.* (Alſo chap. 16. 12, 14), and in the Church. *Lam.* 2. 4, 5, *God hath bent his bow like an enemy*, &c. and *verſ.* 5. Oh! if thou comeſt to that of *Jacob*, *Gen.* 42. 36, *Surely all theſe things are againſt me*, and in them God againſt me, it is ſad with thee. This is the triumph of Faith, *If God be with us, who can be againſt us?* This the ſhreek of thy fainting, *God is againſt me, and then who can be for me?*

Reaſ. 7. 7. It ariſeth from Gods withdrawing. Thus with Chriſt: when God would make his condition ſad, and his burden heavy indeed, the Father, and his own Divinity withdraw, and withhold their comfortable influential preſence from the apprehenſion of the Humane Nature; and when was he thus ſpiritually afflicted, but when moſt outward trouble came upon him, when his Murderers, and the Traytor were upon him, and his
Pſal. 116. 3. life drew near to the grave, as it was prefigured in *David*, when the ſorrows or dangers of death compaſſed him about, then the terrors of Hell took hold upon him, (*i. e.*) terrors ariſing from this, the with-
Mark 1. drawing of the Divine Love and Countenance? Now come his aſtoniſhing, diſmaying fears and ſorrows, preſſing even to death, making him as it were to ſhrink from the great work of his own mercy. Now he cries
Pſal. 22. out as his Type, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* The per-
Matth. 27. petual ſhreek of them which are caſt away. When we can with *David*
1 Sam. 30. 6. encourage our ſelves in our relation to, and intereſt in God, then every, even the heavieſt burden, even death it ſelf, is light, and we can in Chriſts ſtrength ſhake it off, or run away with it, as *Sampſon* with the Gates of the City. But as when the Sun is down or eclipſed, the flowers fold up and droop; or, when the Face before the Glaſs turns away, the Face in it vaniſheth: Even ſo, when God hides his Face, and we doubt of our Title and Intereſt, we are troubled; and then we are as *Sampſon*, his Covenant broken, and his locks, the ſign thereof cut; we are as other men, our ſtrength is gone, any cord will bind us, any burden ſink us, *Iſa.* 64. 7.

Reaſ. 8. 8. I might add, it may ariſe from our diſacquaintedneſs with afflictions, as to our expectation and reſolution. But for Uſe.

1. A word to them which are yet in their ſins out of Chriſt; And it is, 1. Of Conviction. 2. Counſel.

1. Conviction and terrour to them which are out of Chriſt. If Gods People

People be liable to inward and outward trouble at once, wherein yet there is not a drop of wrath; What ſhall the viſitation of the reſt be, wherein there is not a drop of ſaving pity? If they may be ſo hardly put to it, which yet are ever ſecretly and mightily ſupported; What ſhall they do that have no ſtrength but their own to bear up under the mighty hand of God? Surely if they ſmart ſevenfold, the wicked muſt be avenged ſeventy times ſevenfold. If the cup of affliction, by reaſon of the bitter ingredient of inward perplexity, be ſo bitter to them; what becomes of them, for whom the dregs of that Cup are reſerved? The godly may ſtand condemned at their own Bar, but the wicked at Gods too; and nothing remains to them but a certain expectation of execution without a change. Oh! if *Jacob* halt, ſure *Eſau*'s back and bones muſt be broken; If the righteous be (by reaſon of ſharp afflictions within and without) ſcarcely ſaved, (to whom yet all afflictions are through grace ever ſufferable, ſhort, and ſanctified) where ſhall the ſinner appear when his ſins and ſorrows ſhall meet together? There be three dayes wherein thou ſhalt never be able to hold up thy head, and yet thou muſt appear: Firſt, A day of extream Calamity: Secondly, of Death; Thirdly, of Judgment. Oh! remember how ſad it goes with the Godly in a day of outward Calamity, becauſe of inward trouble joyning with it, through gradual want of Knowledg, Faith, and Evidence, the venom of ſin unmortified, malice of Satan not yet quite trodden under their feet, and the withdrawing of Gods Grace and Countenance in part. And conſider how thou wilt ſpeed, which haſt no ſaving Knowledg, no Faith, no Intereſt, art under the reign of Sin and Satan, whom the holy and jealous God cannot endure to behold, but with revenge and execration. *Pſal.* 27. 13. *David* had fainted (in his affliction) had he not believed, *&c.* Surely then thou muſt utterly faint, becauſe thou haſt not obtained an heart to underſtand and believe to this day: The Children of God, notwithſtanding all their inward and outward preſſures, can ſay, as *Paul* ſighs for them all, 2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9, *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed,* (ſo as there is no way to eſcape or bear up); *We are perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not quite deſtroyed.* But if thou lookeſt not to it betimes, ſuch a day will come upon thee, wherein thou ſhalt be ſo ſet with trouble, that thou wilt be abſolutely concluded, and ſhut out from all relief; ſo perplexed, that thou wilt deſpair; ſo purſued (by the avengers of blood) that thou wilt be quite forſaken of Heaven and Earth; ſo caſt down, that thou wilt be utterly deſtroyed and daſh'd in pieces. Oh! if trouble, ſuch trouble may ſeize on God's dear ones; What reprobate fear, and aſtoniſhment, ſhall take hold on thee that art a ſtranger, a ſlave, an enemy, and yet ſecure and preſumptuous in that condition?

2. It is a word of Counſel to thee, as to be an alarm to thy ſecurity, ſo an Antidote to thy preſumption and cenſoriouſneſs in reference to the godly. The men of the world can eaſily paſs over the beams of raging wickedneſs in themſelves and their own, but they maliciouſly and proudly aggravate the motes of infirmity in the godly. If they carry themſelves

ſelves unbecomingly by any impatience under the hand of God, now they are Hypocrites preſently, now they ſink, notwithſtanding they would ſeem to have ſpecial intereſt in, and acquaintance with God to bear them up. Thus was *Job* cenſured, even by his friends, for which God cenſures them, and that with wrath, *Job* 42. 7. Thus Gods People ſerve themſelves, but eſpecially they have this meaſure from the men of the World: They ſee them droop, and walk heavily under ſome outward burden, which they think is but ordinary; they ſee them faint, having drunk of the Cup of affliction which is common; but alas, they conſider not what may be (the weight of their burden) within, what bitter ingredients may be in their Cup, as to their inward man. Now the Spirit is the man, the mind is the ſtrength, and they are not aware how tender the love of God hath made that, and how grieved and broken that may be upon ſome ſpiritual account between God and them. *Joab* reproves *David* for mourning ſo exceſſively for *Abſolom* (and at firſt ſight we may think it ſtrange, that ſo eminent a Saint as *David* ſhould ſo take on for an outward loſs, more, as it ſeems, than for the loſs of Gods Favour and Grace); but *Joab* did not know and conſider what viſitation there might be within *David*, while God ſtood over him with that outward rod; how God might ſet on that outward blow with ſome inward ſmart and rebuke upon his Spirit in ſuch an intimation as this, Oh! *David*, thou that wert ſo obliged to me more than thouſands, I'le make thee know 'tis an evil and bitter thing to provoke me, and diſhonour my Name as thou haſt done; thy Child is dead, *Abſolom* is gone with a Curſe, and *Adonijah* ſhall follow; and now what haſt thou gotten by hearkening to temptations, and pleaſing thy ſelf in the enticements of thy naughty heart? No queſtion but there were ſome ſuch workings of Gods diſpleaſure within him, and therefore no wonder he took on ſo heavily, as *Pſal.* 39. 11: therefore do not paſs ſentence upon the Godly in their extremites, till thou canſt hear and ſee all the bitterneſs of their Condition.

Uſe 2. 2. The ſecond word is to the Godly. 1. They which are not, but may be beſet with this double perplexity. 2. They which are,

1. *Art thou in a ſtate of freedom and exemption? bleſs God; thy lot is very comfortable; but be not ſecure, indulge not thy ſelf with a perſwaſion that it will always laſt.* For,

1. Thou haſt married Chriſt with his Croſs, or not at all; thou art delivered from the Curſe indeed, but thou art appointed to the Croſs, and canſt not with integrity except againſt any part thereof, that without, or that within.

2. Outward afflictions and troubles may be many, and heavy, one upon the neck of another; and by reaſon of them, though they come ſingle, thou mayeſt endure an hard brunt, and have enough to exerciſe thy whole ſtrength of Faith and Patience.

3. Inward Affliction may come, and that's far more heavy and grievous: the Soul is infinitely more tender than the Body, and yet ſcalding water upon the eye, can very hardly be endured. *O then! a wounded ſpirit, who can bear that?*

4. 'Tis

4. 'Tis not improbable, nor unuſual, that both theſe Rods may come upon thee at once, and then thy affliction is a load upon a broken back; now thou wilt have thy hands full indeed, and very hardly be ſaved; now thou wilt need not only all the ſtrength which thou haſt, but all which thou mighteſt have had.

2. You'l ſay, *Sirs, what ſhall we do?*

I anſwer, (as in natural diſtempers) 1. You muſt take ſome Preparatives and Prophulacticks, to prevent the Diſeaſe, if it may be, or at leaſt to break the ſtrength of it, if it doth come, that we may not ſink under it.

2. Some Cordials, Reſtoratives, and Therapeuticks for the Cure of the malady when it is come; I ſhall endeavour by the Grace of God to help you in theſe two caſes, and conclude.

1. Then for Direction, by way of Preparation.

1. Labour to be well ſeen in points of ſaving knowledg, eſpecially Fundamentals. Ignorance I told you was the cauſe of ſoul-diſtreſs, and it is ſo: the impregnable impediment of comfort moſt-what in the Godly; they are not throughly informed, they do not underſtand themſelves well in the matter of the Covenant of Grace, the Doctrine, Way, Benefit, Terms of it, and the miſtakes about it; if they were clear in theſe things, they would have a fairer way to comfort, and more eaſily go to the wells of Salvation to draw water of life at any, even the darkeſt time; our Saviour preſcribes this receipt in *Joh.* 16. 33, *Theſe things have I told you*, &c. (*viz.* the great things of the Goſpel, ſuch as thoſe, *verſ.* 28, *That I came from the Father*, *i.e.* to purchaſe all, *and I go to the Father*, *i.e.* to procure and apply all) theſe things ſay the Diſciples thou haſt ſpoken plainly, thou haſt given us clear evidence, and full information of theſe, &c. points of knowledg: And what advantage did Chriſts teaching and their learning and underſtanding of theſe great matters tend to? *That in me ye might have Peace*, (when) *in the world ye ſhall have Tribulation*. Chriſt had promiſed he would not leave them comfortleſs, *Joh.* 14. 18; and this is the courſe he takes, and the way he puts the Diſciples into, to prevent or prepare for Tribulation, that it might not ſpoil them of their inward Peace, *viz.* Inſtruction and Knowledg. O! the Lord give you with utmoſt diligence to follow on to know, and to work in what you know, into your hearts; So ſhall you have that within you, which (in dependance on Chriſt in the many points well underſtood) will be of ſingular uſe and advantage to quiet and compoſe your ſpirits in all your Troubles and Languiſhments; grounds of knowledg are grounds of ſupport and comfort. *Direct.* 1.

2. In order to the forenamed ſecond cauſe of this diſtemper, be ſure you cloſe with, and often take hold on God by renewed acts of Faith. My Brethren, Faith is not to be acted only at firſt, for our entrance into the State of Grace, but 'tis our duty and wiſdom to carry on the exerciſe of Faith for our continuance and progreſs in that ſtate and paſſage through all thoſe Temptations, Difficulties, Oppoſitions, Diſcouragements we are to meet withal therein: Faith and Prayer muſt be as the breathing of our ſouls in an out, to keep the heart in life: *the Juſt ſhall live* (*i.e* every part, degree, and act of life) *by his Faith*; *Direct.* 2.

Faith; this again is the order the great Phyſitian of our Souls preſcribes, *John* 14. 1, *Let not your hearts be troubled?* why how ſhall they prevent or help it? *believe*: they were Believers already: Oh! but they muſt ſtill in reference to every change and condition, or occaſion of life, eſpecially in order to this, that they may not be troubled in trouble; that the ſtorm get not into their hearts, to ſhake and ſhatter them within; they muſt believe, *i. e.* they muſt be much in the acting and exerciſing of Faith, upon the grounds thereof; 'tis ſad that I ſhall now ſay, We come to ſome Chriſtians in their dumps and deſpondencies, ſhew them the Promiſe, Chriſt in it, the way to it: they are ſo to ſeek, that they ſcarce know what we mean; we are as *Barbarians* to them, they are ready to faint under our hand, before we can (as it were) ſtanch their bleeding, or apply any Plaiſter, or Cordial, or make them underſtand their way and ground of ſupport and comfort; and all this for want of uſe and exerciſe of Faith; the acting of any faculty (where life is not come to the declining ſtate, as it never fares with the life of Grace) ſtrengthens that faculty; and that perſon can readily, even in the dark, go to his Reſt or Cordial, where he uſes himſelf to be; therefore, take a Chriſtian, which makes conſcience to bear his weight on the ground and object of faith (Chriſt in the promiſe of Free-grace) to a ſenſible loſt undone ſinner, let World and Devil conſpire to trouble him, and God try him; ſaith he, I know not what to do, but I'll try my old way, 'tis good for me to draw near ſtill; I'll do ſo ſtill as I uſe to do, I'll caſt my ſelf down upon the Free-Grace of Chriſt in the Promiſe; I'll lay the weight of my ſinking ſpirit there, I'll renew my hold, life expectation there; this is my old path, I'll never be turned, or beaten out here. This Chriſtian in his ſtrength may challenge all the gates of Hell. This was *Davids* courſe, *Pſal.* 71. 5, *Thou art my truſt from my youth*, &c. thence was it that he could ſay in *Pſal.* 56. 3, *At what time I am afraid, I will truſt in thee*; his ſhield and ſword was always in his hand, therefore he could make uſe of it when fear and inward trouble offered themſelves. Afraid! alas who is not; but what courſe will you take then? even what courſe you uſe to take, *i. e.* Believe, uſe Faith always, and have it now.

Pſal. 73. 25.

Iſa. 26. 3.

Direct. 3. 3. In reference to the third and ſeventh cauſe of trouble of mind (coming in conjunction with trouble in outward things) *viz.* ſhort and dim Evidence; *Give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; *for if you do ſo, you ſhall never fall, i. e.* under the power of ſin and wrath, which make up the ſpiritual burden; *But ſo an abundant entrance ſhall be adminiſtred to you into the Kingdom*, &c. *i. e.* you ſhall have a ſafe and ſecure, peaceable, quiet, comfortable, well-aſſured paſſage, through all the ſtraights and ſtorms we can meet withal on this ſide the Kingdom, even death it ſelf; reſt upon Chriſt always by Faith of adherence on Goſpel terms, and you are ſafe: but reſt not, ſit not down with this Faith, for 'tis not enough to comfort you in an evil day, though to ſupport, it is.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

Obj. *Oh! but I have laboured and waited, and yet cannot obtain.*

Anſw.

Anſw. But go on, and thou canſt not miſs it (for 'tis promiſed, *Eſay* 32. 17. & 57. 19. *Rom.* 8. 16, &c.) and thou ſhalt have aſſurance in thy greateſt need; better affliction find thee in this work and purſuit, than put thee upon it (as for certain it will to thy coſt), when affliction comes, then firſt for a man to begin to put the queſtion, Am I in Chriſt? am I in the ſtate of Grace? favour of God, &c.? Oh! thou wilt find it hard to get above thy fears; but *Pſal.* 46. 1, *God is a very preſent help in time of trouble*, i. e. for aſſurance in a darkſom ſtate, when thou canſt make no ſhift without it; do thou very much ſeek God for it in thy freedom, and thou ſhalt be ſure of it in thy need, he will be *very much found* (Hebr.) as before, give all diligence to make, and thou art ſure.

4. Add hereunto in order to the promoting of a well-grounded evidence and aſſurance, a prudent obſervation of, and careful attendance to the doubts, which ariſe upon occaſion, about your condition; there is no Chriſtian attains to that degree of aſſurance, but is ſometimes troubled with doubts, *viz.* ſuch as theſe: *Direct.* 4.

1. I was never humbled enough; my ſore was never ſearched to the bottom; can my cure be done with ſo little pain?

2. I never knew the beginning, or manner of my converſion; can Grace like dew come without noiſe, in inſenſible degrees? Surely I am at beſt but a refined Moraliſt.

3. I can be heartily and exceſſively afflicted for outward loſſes, *&c.* but ſin, as ſin, is not ſuch a burden to me; and the loſs of Gods favour goes not ſo near me.

4. I can pour out my heart in vain delights, but have little livelineſs of affection for Spiritual things.

5. I grow heavier and heavier in duties, and I think were it not for ſhame, I ſhould be ready to lay them aſide, and tread them under foot: ſo little joy do I take in them, ſo little good do I get by them, and the like.

Now what doſt thou ſhift off and let paſs theſe and other like doubts, without endeavouring by what means thou canſt, to ſalve, and aſſoil them with ſome reſolution and ſatisfaction? this will be of ill conſequence, I'll tell thee what will come of it, they will return upon thee, and be as motes in thy eyes, gravel and thorns in thy feet, when the hand of God is upon thee; whereas if they were well weighed, there would ſcarce a ſcruple be found in them.

5. To meet with the fourth cauſe of the Diſeaſe, which is ſome ſin returning, *&c.* caſt up thy Spiritual Accounts, and ſet them even every day; obſerve thy particular ſins, offences, breaches, which we are ever making between God and us; humble thy ſelf in a heart-breaking Soul-grieving particular acknowledgment of them, and ſtrengthen thy ſelf, and ſet thy ſelf aright, by a particular application of Chriſt in the Grace of the Promiſe, in reference to theſe particular offences ſo acknowledged: Sins that through neglegence eſcape thy obſervation, will return to make cracks and flaws in thy Evidence, which Affliction will find out to thy terror and diſquietment, but if thou takeſt this courſe, *Direct.* 5.

the Word is for thee, *i.e.* Joh. 1. 9, *If we confeſs*; and *Lev.* 26. 40.
Pſal. 32. 5. and now if this or that ſin return, what mayeſt thou ſay; Truth Lord, I am guilty, and my guilt thou doſt juſtly ſuffer to be awakened in this evil day, and hour of temptation; but Lord thou knoweſt this, and this ſin in particular hath been my burden, under which I have poured out my heart in groans and complaints, imploring and applying Chriſt in the promiſed Grace of Pardon, and Power in reference to it, and thou haſt heard it and known it; in this caſe though Afflictions ſeem to ſearch out iniquity, yet it ſhall not be found; but when Affliction ſtarts ſome ſin, which thou didſt wink at, or ſlightly paſs over, then thou wilt find trouble and ſorrow indeed.

Direct. 6. 6. Becauſe there is much malignity in this diſtemper, let me here alſo add in reference to the ſame cauſe, and the ſixth, this Preventive. Follow on the Work of Mortification cloſe; there is a combate between Fleſh and Spirit; be ſure you take the right ſide, if ſin be it which imbitters thy
Iſa. 27. 9. life, and gives a ſting to every Affliction, diſarm Affliction, and kill that which will kill thee; the deſign of the Lord in affliction is Mortification: now if thou joyneſt thy hand in the ſame work, God is ever with thee in the ſame way, and not againſt thee; but in caſe thou conniveſt at, hideſt, ſhelteresſt ſome known corruption, then thou canſt hardly apprehend God, but as thine Enemy coming againſt thee.

As it was with the City of *Abel*, 2 Sam, 20. they were terrified at the approach of *Joab* and *David*'s Army, Oh! ſaith the woman upon the Wall, *Art thou come to deſtroy the inheritance of the Lord? No* ſaith *Joab*, but there's a Traytor *Sheba* harboured here, *&c.* 'Tis he that put the City into fear and danger, and made *Joab* ſeem their Enemy, when his head was delivered all was quiet; now when thou inſiſteſt on the buſineſs of Mortification, thou wilt joy when thou falleſt into Tribulation, as it was with *Jael*, Judg. 4. having done execution upon *Siſera*, Come ſaith ſhe to *Barak*, &c. *Welcom my Lords*, I know whom you purſue, here he is dead at your feet, *Behold the Nail in his temples!* O! ſaith one, viſited with the ſtroak of Death, I have been long getting down this body of death, and now God will do all my work at once; be not ſlack in this work, and Afflictions will be more joyous than grievous.

Direct. 7. Yet again, to come to the root of this malignity, and in order to the advancing of the work of Mortification: endeavour after mortified affections to the World, theſe are the ſuckets that draw away thy ſtrength from God, and the fewel, and foment, and ſtrength of all that corruption that muſt be mortified. Averſion from God, with an immoderate clinging and cleaving to the creature, is the whole corruption of Nature. Affliction is the reducing thee to God, and the ungluing, diſengaging, and divorcing thee from a carnal worldly intereſt: therefore *minus gaudebis, minus dolebis*, the leſs thou joyeſt, the leſs thou rueſt; the leſs thou layeſt a World-intereſt near thy heart, the leſs that Affliction which is the parting work, will to thy heart; therefore let all creature-comforts and advantages be looſe about thee as thy cloaths, which

which thou mayeſt eaſily lay aſide, and not as thy skin, which cannot be pulled off without great torture; Affliction endangers nothing but that which is outward, therefore let not thy exceſſive reſpect to that which is without thee, make thy Affliction an inward terror. If thou counteſt the World of no value, thou wilt be able, without inward perplexity and fear, to paſs through all places of danger and plunder; as the Travellor, when he carries but a ſmall matter, which he knows if he loſes, it will not at all undo him. Beſides, *If thou loveſt the World, the love of the Father is not in thee*; and this will be a deſperate venomous ſting to thy Soul in thy Affliction; if thou wouldſt not have the World thy plague and thy poyſon in the enjoying, thy wrack and thy terror in the loſing, comply with the Word and Spirit of Grace in the application of a Chriſt crucified, for the crucifying and mortifying of thy affections unto every earthly intereſt.

8. In reference to the eighth cauſe (unacquaintedneſs with Affliction) live in the meditation and expectation of the Croſs, be much in the knowledg of the neceſſity, nature, and deſign of Afflictions. *Direct.* 8.

1. Neceſſity, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, *If need be, you muſt be in heavineſs for a time.* In reſpect of the terms of the Covenant which lie in this, Deny your ſelf, and take up your Croſs, *&c.* And in reſpect of your diſpoſition, we cannot be without them to wean us from the World, to imbitter the creature to us, to conform us to a crucified Saviour, and make us partakers of his holineſs.

2. The nature and deſign of afflictions; They are fire not to conſume our Gold, but to purge away our Droſs; they are not revenging Judgments, but fatherly medicinal Corrections; not judicial Poyſon, but remedial Phyſick, *&c.* Therefore 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, *Think not ſtrange*, be not ſtrangers (as the word imports) to the fiery and greateſt tryal, and thou wilt not be diſmayed when it comes. Even Poyſon may be habituated, and made innocent. If a ſtranger come in unexpected into our houſe, grim, and armed with inſtruments of miſchief, we know not whence he is, nor what he comes for, it will ſtartle and appale us: But if we be acquainted with him and his deſign, and expect him, we are quiet, and compoſed to entertain him. So when affliction comes, we can ſay, This is the Cup my Father gives me, who I am ſure means me no hurt; this is but what I looked for every day, *&c.* Inure we therefore our ſelves to the Croſs, and make it familiar, converſing with it in our meditation and expectation. Seeſt thou one afflicted with the loſs of a Wife, another of a Husband, another of a Child, another of Eſtate, another begging bread in Priſon or diſtreſs, *&c.* bear part of his burden in ſympathy and pity, and readineſs to ſuccour him, and put thy ſelf in his or her caſe, ſuppoſing thou wert ſo and ſo (it would do thee no hurt), what ſhouldſt thou do? And ſo God will make thy burden light, *Pſal.* 41. 1. So thou wilt be prepared to entertain and meet the burden, and it ſhall not fall upon thee, and upon thy ſpirit to cruſh and ſink thee, *&c.* Think often, and think not amiſs (have no hard conceits) of affliction, and it ſhall not be hard upon thee. Take this Courſe, and then as for the malice of

Satan, in accuſing and tormenting, and the ſeeming ſeverity of the Lord, in withholding and withdrawing, thou ſhalt not need to trouble thy ſelf, for Satan is a reſtrained and conquered enemy, and cannot hurt thee; and God is reconciled, and will not hurt thee: He may try thee, by intercepting the ſweetneſs of fruition; He will never curſe thee, by intermitting or breaking the firmneſs of the Union; and if he hide his face for a moment, lament after him, and he will viſit thee with the everlaſting kindneſs of his compaſſion, which changes not, though there may be a change as to what thou feeleſt.

Thus much for the Preventives, to prepare for double afflictions upon the inward and outward man before they come. Now ſecondly, what ſhall they do that are already under them?

Direct. 1. *Negative.* Do not go about to ſettle thy mind by diverſion, or turning thy thoughts another way, nor think that time will wear off this trouble; for this will but encreaſe thy diſquiet in it ſelf, or in the cauſes of it; and wear off the ſenſe of thy condition, which is occaſional and preparative to thy well-grounded peace and ſettlement.

2. Deſign not a little eaſe; the ſore that is but skin'd over, will break out again, and be more dangerous; put in therefore for a cure, and that not partial, but thorough.

Direct. 2. Poſitively: take this courſe upon the ſenſe of thy condition, and the actual knowledg of the fundamental matters of the Covenant of Grace. Firſt, and immediately come, (at leaſt) look unto Chriſt for Faith, and then by Faith, looking to him as the Author of Faith, believe, *i. e.* conſent with all thy heart to receive him, and reſt on him on the terms of the Goſpel, to be ſaved by him only in his own way, at his own rate: this is the courſe *David*, *Jonah*, the Church, in the places aforenamed, took; this is the courſe the Lord preſcribes, *Iſa.* 50. *ult. Who*, &c. *Let this Child of Light* (and ſuch thou art, if thou takeſt this courſe, feareſt to ſin againſt God, and hearkeneſt to this word I now ſpeak) *ſitting in darkneſs and ſeeing no light* (there is the depth of trouble of mind); *truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay himſelf upon his God*: His Name
Exod. 33. 19. *is the Lord God gracious*, &c. *Emanuel*, a Saviour, ſpreading his arms all the day long (any time before the night of death cloſe thy eyes and Chriſts bowels) even to the diſobedient, and will in no wiſe caſt out or loſe any that come to him upon all his own terms. Thou dear troubled heart, how wilt thou heal and ſettle thy ſelf? what wilt thou do? Wilt thou firſt make ſatisfaction by thy mourning, humiliation, reformation, purpoſe of amendment, and ſo commend and ingratiate thy ſelf to Chriſt? Thou neſtleſt upon a falſe bottom, and thy heart deceives thee; ſound reſt and peace is not to be had this way, if it be thy firſt, principal, or only way.

On the other hand; Are you willing to let Chriſt to let you into Heaven, and not lead you his own way, *i. e.* under his Government in all things? then you run away from Chriſt, and cannot be ſaved by him as ſuch; But doſt thou freely and willingly conſent, upon the ſenſe of thy loſt condition, to take Chriſt for all purpoſes, for Grace and Glory? Thou

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art welcom to him; and let this be thy reſt, in coming to him burdened and weary, willing to take his yoke upon thee; *Matt.* 11. 28. He ſaves thee to the utmoſt, only upon coming. Let this be ſatisfaction and ſettlement in thy trouble, from whatever cauſe it comes: Oh! how clear is this way according to the contents of the Covenant of Grace, which is thus: Chriſt ſtands always ready to receive any that *is willing* to come to him upon his terms, and *will never caſt them off.*

Oh! but if he were my God and my Chriſt, I would come to him, and believe in him. Object.

Your coming thus to him upon his own terms, makes him yours; gives thee intereſt, and ſhall give thee true reſt. Sol.

Oh! but I have long ſtood out againſt his invitations, and rejected his importunities; Chriſt hath called graciouſly, and I have heard His Spirit hath knockt, and my Conſcience hath preſſed me to believe and come, and yet I have ſtood out, and now I may expect he will throw me away with indignation; I have denied Mercy ſo many times, and Mercy will ſurely now deny me; and here comes in the trouble. Object.

No, he will not in any wiſe caſt thee out, if they are willing to come. He knew that all that belong to his Grace, till thou art effectually called and quickened, and drawn to cloſe with mercy in the offer, will ſerve him thus, and therefore he waits ſtill, and ſtill, till they can be gotten to be willing to accept and cloſe with him, and then for certain he cloſeth with them. Sol.

Oh! but I have made my addreſs, and ſeemed to come to him, and have made profeſſion, and been taken for a Believer many years, but I have falſified with him. I am a ſtudied Hypocrite, and have compaſſed God with lies: Surely then there is no Mercy for me. Object.

All this ariſeth from thy ignorance of the Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, which calls thee to believe upon the ſenſe of this alſo. Suppoſe all this, (though theſe ſad workings of thy doubts and troubles are no bad ſigns, being but part of thy Combate), yield all againſt thy ſelf if there be no other way, (and it may be there is no better way in this juncture) yet now be willing on Goſpel-terms, and it is done, and thou mayeſt be at reſt, as if all thy former work had been true; and it may be it was true, but however one or the other, thy way is immediately to come, and that ſhall be cleared up afterward; and if thou haſt doubled with God, thou wilt the rather be afraid to do ſo ſtill. Sol.

Oh! but now come! This would be only ſelf and ſlaviſh fear; my neceſſity compels me now; I can make no other ſhift: There is no ingenuity in ſuch a faith as I am like to put forth in this my extremity. Object.

Thou muſt yet be willing, *&c.* and all is well. The occaſion of believing is always extremity and neceſſity: for none ever came to Chriſt as long as they could make any ſhift without him: but the cauſe if thou comeſt, is the mighty power of God to make thee unfeignedly willing upon all the terms; and thou art no leſs acceptable to God, becauſe thou art conſtrained by Grace upon the pinch of thy neceſſity to come, *Rom.* 11. 32. *Hoſ.* 5. *ult.* God puts thee to this pinch that he might hear of thee; Sol.

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in that latter place, it is as if God had ſaid. Well, I have called again and again, and uſed variety of means with this People, but all in vain; I will take another courſe, I will leave them, go to my place, hide my ſelf, that trouble, and horror, and anguiſh ſhall take hold on them; and what then? Shall it be unſeaſonable and too late to come? No, then they will and ſhall ſeek me early; ſee how welcom a ſinner is in this caſe to Chriſt. The Prodigal, he runs his courſe, ſpends all in Riot and Luxury, and was reduced to utter extremity, and then he bethinks himſelf of coming home; *I will go, there be many Manſions in my Fathers Houſe,* Luk. 15. *and I periſh for want of Bread.* Being upon this knowledg of his Fathers fulneſs drawn, and upon ſenſe of his own loſtneſs driven, he comes; And what Salutation do you think his Father might give him? What, are you come indeed? In good time? You, that have all this while taken your ſwing in all Wickedneſs, as long as you could live, my Houſe was not good enough for you; and now, that you have laid me under the reproach of your leudneſs, and fulfilling your luſts, as long as you had a penny in your Purſe, or a rag to your back: Do you now come to me? There is no duty or affection to me that ſways you hither, but you are compelled by the extremity you have brought your ſelf to: Get you gone with a ſorrow, and never look me in the face more. Thus we would have thought, but it is quite otherwiſe, his Father, when he did but ſay he would come, meets him afar off, falls on his neck, kiſſes him, brings him home, provides the beſt Room, the beſt Robe, the beſt Kid, all the beſt, and there is great joy; His Father doth not queſtion what draws, or what drives; whether he comes out of compelling neceſſity, or out of ingenuity and dutiful affection; but he is come, that is enough. *This my Son was dead, and is alive; was loſt, and is found;* and there's all done that poſſibly may make him welcom. Apply it for your encouragement to believe, and ſettlement in your undoubted intereſt by Faith. Though you ſeem to come late, and out of neceſſity, yet God's thoughts are not your thoughts, yours may be thoughts of wrath, *&c.* but Gods are of pity, love, acceptation upon your coming. Thus you ſee your way is immediately to come and caſt your ſelves upon Chriſt, on the terms of the Goſpel, and your great trouble ſhall be removed. Make not a judgment of your condition from what you feel, but from what you hear, from the Word of grace which now gives ſentence on your ſide.

Direct. 3. Then having this for your ſupport, ſearch, look back to experiences; look into your ſelves what marks you can find of the truth of your Faith: and in this, be ſure you take hold on the Promiſe that lies neareſt to you, *i.e.* is moſt ſuitable to your preſent condition, as in point of fear to ſin, *Iſa.* 50. 10. Loſtneſs, *Matt.* 18. 11. Poverty of Spirit, Longing and thirſting after Righteouſneſs, *&c. Matt.* 5. 3, 4, 6. and ſo one Grace and Promiſe will draw in all.

Direct. 4. In dependence on Chriſt in the Promiſe, wait till he ſpeaks peace and aſſurance, ever fearing to offend God, eſpecially by caſting off duty, diſtruſting

diſtruſting of him, charging him with folly, limiting him to time or means, knowing and aſſuring your ſelves, That you cannot ſo pleaſe God in any thing, as in reſolved Faith to cleave to him, and to follow him fully in the patient expectation of the promiſe of Grace and Glory.

Thus accepting Chriſt in the Covenant, in the ſtrength of the Grace thereof; Give up thy whole ſelf to Chriſt, in a Covenant of willing, univerſal, unreſerved obedience; and ſay with *David*, Pſal. 85. 8, *I will hearken what the Lord will ſay, for he ſpeaketh peace to his people, that* (by the power thereof) *they turn not again to folly.*

In

In what Things muſt we uſe Moderation, and in what not?

Phil. IV. 5.

Let your Moderation be known unto all Men, the Lord is at hand.

WHat St. *Auſtin* ſaid in his days of another Scripture, That it *ſtood more in need of good practiſing, than any learned Interpretation:* That may I ſay in theſe days wherein I live, concerning the words that I have read to you at this time. I ſhall not therefore detain you, with ſhewing their coherence, (eſpecially conſidering their intireneſs) or with any gloſſing upon them, but haſte to open the Nature of this Duty, and preſs the practice thereof upon you all. In the Verſe you have two general parts.

1. An Exhortation to the ſhewing Moderation, which being in *materia neceſſaria*, is a Command.

2. The Argument enforcing it, *The Lord is at hand.*

The former will bound my preſent Diſcourſe, which I need not alter, but according to the Grammatical order the words ſtand in, might conſider the *perſonæ res, & actiones* expreſt therein, all which make up the whole of the Duty enjoyned: yet if you pleaſe to have the Propoſition formed; take it thus,

Doct. *It is God's Command, and our Duty, to let our Moderation be known unto all men.* Which I ſhall proſecute, according to the order of Nature, in this method. 1. In opening the Nature of Moderation. 2. In ſhewing its Exerciſe. 3. By whom, and to whom. 4. Why? And laſtly, Make Application.

Moderation opened. 1. Concerning the nature of *Moderation*, or what it is; wherein the ſignification of the Word, deſcription of the Thing; its Subject, Kinds, Rule, and Extreams. And here I confeſs I enter upon an unbeaten path; the word ἐπιεικὲς, and ἐπιείκεια, which deſcends from it, (and for which, by a Græciſm, it is uſed in the Text,) being of ſuch multifarious ſignification,

fication, and no where in Scripture rendred in that extent, as here, nor any where elſe (that I can find) by *Moderation*, which alſo occurs in no other place of all the Bible. It ſignifies properly, that which is *fit*, *decent*, *due*, *meet*, *convenient*.

And is accordingly rendred by former Interpreters, *Modeſtia*; not as oppoſed to pride or haughtineſs in its ſtrict Philoſophick acceptation, (which ſome not attending to, have therefore quarrelled with) but that which doth moderate our actions, in which ſenſe the Maſters of that Language frequently uſe it; and by later, for avoiding that ambiguity, *Moderatio*, from whence is formed our Engliſh word *Moderation*. Which (in its latitude) is not any particular Grace or Virtue, but that fit and proper temper we ought to obſerve in the governing of our hearts and lives: that equal Judgment, which ſhould command our wills and affections, and all our humane actions, which are capable of exceſs or defect, by proportioning them according to the quality of the Object, and the end for which, and whom they are imployed; for the preſerving of peace within our ſelves, and with others; that there may be no contumacy or rebellion in our affections to diſquiet our ſelves, or in our actions to diſquiet others. So that Moderation, according to its Subject, is either that of the mind, which is as the cauſe, or of the will and affections, in their actings, which is as the effect, from all which the whole man is denominated *Moderate*. The former, or that of the mind, is that part of a Chriſtian prudence, which proportions our actions to the Object which the will chuſeth; and its end according to the variety of circumſtances the agent is in, by applying the general rules of Scripture for our walking, to our particular actions, and is accordingly well rendered here by one of the Antients, *rationalibilis converſatio*, your reaſonable or equitable Converſation. The latter of the will pertains to the ſeveral and particular virtues therein, eſpecially thoſe that ſerve for the reſtraining our moſt ſtrong and impetuous paſſions, which offer the greateſt violence to the equality of our minds. And therefore, although it moſt properly be of the judgment; yet being moſt conſpicuous and diſcernable in the exerciſe of ſuch Virtues, it doth according to the Quality of the Object about which they are converſant, aſſume their ſeveral Notions and Names. The moſt violent paſſions in reference to our ſelves, being the luſting power after the good things of this life, and conſequently the grief which ariſes from the want or loſs of them; it is therefore in reference to the former, *Temperance* (in its large acceptation); and the latter, *Patience*; and in relation to others, the raging power of anger and revenge, with what flows from them; in which regard it is in the Magiſtrate, *Clemeny*; and *humanity*, *meekneſs*, *gentleneſs*, *lenity*, in all. In this variety is the word uſed by Authors Sacred and Prophane, which I will not clog you with. And for this cauſe it conſiſts in that mediocrity, which approaches nearer to the extream of defect, and conſequently is oppoſed to *violence*, *impetuouſneſs*, *or inordinacy of affection*, (not as placed upon undue objects, for that's materially evil, and to be wholly declined, not moderated, but upon lawful moderation) and in general, to all *exceſs*

Καθῆκον, πρέπον, προσῆκον ἱκανόν. Heſych.

ἐπιεικὲς τὸ πρέπον. Etymol.

Modeſtia dicta eſt à modo, ubi autem modus nec plus eſt quicquam nec minus Cicer. Eſt autem modeſtius in animo continens moderationem cupiditatum. Idem. 3. Rhet.

Ambros *in loc.*

ἐπιεικὲς τῷ βιαίῳ opponit Hermog. μεδὲν ὑπερβαιλόνλως, ἀλλὰ μεσείαις ἐπιεικῶς, &c. Hoc.

in humane actions. Hence it is (by the way) as I conceive, that it's commanded ſo frequently in Scripture by negative Precepts, as, *Love not the World, nor the things of the World,* John 2. 15. *Take no thought for your life, for the morrow,* Matth. 6. 24, 31, 34, *verſes. Fear not them which kill the body,* Mat. 10. 12, 31. Luke 12. 4, 7, *Let not your hearts be troubled,* John 14. 1, and many the like, which I cannot ſtand to mention; and ſometimes by the action contrary to its oppoſite vice, as *Matth.* 5. 39, 40, 41, *Turn the other cheek; let him have thy Cloak alſo; go with him twain,* i. e. rather than violently reſiſt, and revenge thy ſelf. Moderation then being no particular Grace or Virtue, (as you have heard) cannot have any peculiar object, but only in common with the Principles and Actions wherein it is imployed; whereby it becomes uncapable of any future accurate diviſion into ſeveral kinds. For although it be of a general conſideration, yet not as a Principle which acts upon its Object; but that which peculiarly reſpects the actions themſelves, when the Object is pitched upon; it being Moderations Office to regulate and govern Principles in their actings upon their due Objects choſen, that they exceed not therein. So that all thoſe Graces and Virtues which reſpect the *manner of Actions*, as Zeal, Sincerity, &c. that reſpect the moral quality, as this doth the moral quantity, degree, or meaſure of them, are of ſo many ſeveral kinds, as the actions are wherein they are converſant; ſo alſo is Moderation. And in regard our particular actions are ſo very many, ſo diverſe, and cloathed with ſuch infinite variety of circumſtances; it is impoſſible to lay down any certain *Rule*, that may determine wherein Moderation in them all ſhould conſiſt: The τὰ δέοντα, or the things that are juſt, neceſſary, and convenient, and no other, being always in particular actions, very difficult to define, as the Philoſopher acknowledgeth, who ſaith, *There is nothing more full of difficulty, than in every thing to find the Mean:* The Rule he lays down to walk by, is Reaſon, and a prudent mans determination; the beſt Nature affords: and are eſpecially good for the Duties of the ſecond Table, which he only (though not to all) ſpeaks of; yet we (through ths goodneſs of God) have a more ſure and certain one to guide us, to which we ſhall do well to take heed, even the Scriptures, which are able to make us wiſe to Salvation. It will be worth our while to ſpeak briefly, what we can, touching the *Rule*, which in general muſt guide and determine our Moderation. For which end we muſt know, that all our humane actions, which are capable of moral good or evil, are of two ſorts, eſpecially according to their Objects, *religious* or *civil*. The former requires a Spiritual Principle, End, and Rule, by which we muſt perform them for their manner and meaſure, which Scriptnre doth abundantly for the internal, by its particular, and ſufficiently for the external, by its general Precepts, declare. For the latter, or civil Actions, as a natural principle and end referrible to God's Glory; ſo alſo for their manner and meaſure, the general rules of Scripture to allow, and preſcribe them, is all we can reaſonably expect, and is ſufficient for the ſame. In the Application whereof, Reaſon and prudent determination are three wayes ſubſervient.

1. In

1. In judging the Nature or Quality of the Objects in general, which we are particularly imployed about (as the good things, or evils of this life, in the particulars wherein we are converſant) according to what Scripture declares them to be, when it ſpeaks of them, eſpecially not comparatively, but abſolutely what they are in themſelves.

2. Of the end God hath ordained ſuch things for, about which he hath commanded us to be imployed, and accordingly to proportion our actions. It being a known Rule in the Schools, *Omnium appetibilium finis eſt menſura*; or, that the end is that which muſt preſcribe the meaſure of our actings, according to its double reſpect, *rei, & perſonæ*, for what, and for whom the action is.

Laſtly, In due conſideration of the circumſtances of the Agent, wherein is ſuch great variety, not only in regard of the perſon, which involves the end *for whom* the action is, but all the adjacent circumſtances, that herein occurs by far the greateſt difficulty. For example, In Meats and Drinks. Conſider diligently their nature in thoſe ſet before thee; then their end for refreſhing us, not feeding our luſts; and of thy ſelf, what is ſufficient and convenient for thee in the circumſtances thou art then in, and accordingly uſe them, or put *a knife to thy throat and refrain*, as the Wiſe-man ſpeaks, *Prov.* 13. 2, for that which may but be ſufficient for one, may ſerve for another to make his Belly his God: yea, that which may be only convenient to the ſame perſon at one time, may be gluttony and exceſs at another. And as about things, ſo in our dealing with others, much more variety, both in reſpect of our ſelves, and thoſe we have to do withal. As we muſt remit that to one, we need not, nay, ſometimes ought not to another, according to our own and their capacity; as they are poorer or richer than our ſelves, as they are weak, or wilful and malicious oppoſers of Truth or Equity; and a thouſand ſuch like conſiderations, which occur in our actions; which, though alwayes ſufficient in themſelves to determine us, yet, becauſe of our ſhortneſs of ſight, are often but as the uncertain twinkling ſtar-light to us, whereby to ſteer our courſe.

All that's ſaid of Moderation, will more clearly appear, if we conſider its *Extreams*, from the nature of God's Commands, which are of two ſorts. 1. Some are Affirmative, and thoſe either general, what we muſt do, *&c.* and imply the end for which, and all the circumſtances that neceſſarily attend our doing it: Or particular, and expreſs the circumſtances External, as time and place; and Internal (uſually called the manner) which comprehends the quality, and the moral quantity or proportion we are ſpeaking of, which implies the *intenſneſs*, *frequency*, and *duration* of our actions. Theſe continually oblige us, though not to continual practice, but only when God requires; the former by way of more abſoluteneſs, the latter more conditionally, as depending *thereupon*. 2. The other ſort of preceps are Negative, ſomewhat we muſt not do, and ſo conſequently at once forbid all the concomitants of ſuch actions as are prohibited; others not forbidding us the Object, but rectifying us about it, in the end we muſt do it, for manner how, *&c.* both which obliges to

tinual obſervance, and in morals *to the contrary duties.* By which it appears, in our not right proportioning our actions, we ſin in omiſſion, by not doing ſo fully as he commands; in commiſſion, when we do thoſe things that are our duty, but exceed therein, and go beyond the bounds God hath ſet us: and this is formally immoderateneſs, which is rectified by Moderation. As for actions materially evil, as *Jonah*'s being angry with God, hating virtue, and loving vice, *&c.* which are abſolutely forbidden, no proportion is to have place, but it, and all other circumſtances, together with the action, wholly avoided or ſuppreſſed; becauſe towards undue objects forbidden us, there can be no defect, in regard there ſhould be no action, and therefore no Moderation or Government thereof. For inſtance, in thoſe two great Commands, on which hang all the Law and the Prophets, as our bleſſed Saviour tells us, *Matt.* 22. 46, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength, and with all thy mind; and thy Neighbour as thy ſelf,* Luk. 10. 27. Here's the Grace of Love required to act towards God; the manner expreſt, in *heart, ſoul, ſtrength, mind*; the meaſure in the four *all's,* (the New Teſtament adding one to the three of the Old Teſtament, ſo far is the Goſpel from detracting from duty): here can be no exceſs, in regard we can never love him as he deſerves; not only in regard of what he hath done for us, but is to us, being our end and happineſs; and towards our Neighbour, the manner expreſt, *as thy ſelf,* i. e. truly and ſincerely, but not *with all thy heart,* &c. that's only God's due, who is abſolutely to be loved for himſelf, others for him. Herein, alas, Grace is defective, but never exceeds; ſo that Moderation hath here no place; for if we love any perſon or thing more than God, Chriſt and our ſelves; it is not the action of Grace, but ſinful affection, which is to be moderated. For he that with his natural affection loves Father or Mother, Wife or Child, (which yet they ought greatly to love) more than God or Chriſt, is not worthy of them.

I am not ignorant all this while, that this word ἐπιείκεια, is moſt frequently uſed in a *forenſical, or Law-ſenſe* more ſtrictly: The *Moraliſts, Schoolmen,* and *Civilians,* borrowing it from *Ariſtotle,* and reſtraining it to that *particular moderation of mitigating ſtrict juſtice in the execution of humane Laws*; and ſo is rendered, *Equitas Equity.* Which is either that of the Magiſtrate in his publick capacity, and is ſo *Clemencia Clemency,* and is oppoſed to *Cruelty*: The Magiſtrate being obliged, as not to write his Laws in blood, like *Draco*'s, ſo alſo not to execute them with cruelty, (though, where requiſite, with ſeverity) but to moderate them by the Law of Nature, other Laws, former Precedents, conſtant Cuſtoms, which hath the nature of Laws, or the reaſon and end of the Law, which is more equitable (and more Law, ſay ſome) than the Letter; and amongſt Chriſtians, by the written Laws of God; that there may be *convenientia pœna ad delictum,* or a proportioning Puniſhment

to

to the quality of the offence, all Circumſtances (which the Law cannot poſſibly foreſee or provide for) being duly conſidered. This includes all Superiors, Political, Eccleſiaſtical, Domeſtical, &c. and is frequently joyned with *Juſtice* and *Judgment* in Scripture, as executed both by God and Man, *Pſal.* 98. 9. & 99. 4. *Iſa.* 11. 4. *Prov.* 1. 3. & 2. 19. 17. 26. *Mich.* 3. 9, &c. Or ſecondly, that of private perſons, (or publick in their private capacity) which is between party and party, when according to the rules of equity, we omit what the rigour of the letter of the Law would adjudg us, thereby neither injuring our ſelves or others, which is uſually called *probitas* or *honeſtas*; by us *common honeſty* that ſhould be 'twixt man and man. And hence ſome borrow it, and reſtrain it to that carriage the Law takes not cognizance of, in our meekneſs and gentleneſs, making it that ſingle Virtue the Moraliſts call *manſuetudo*, we meekneſs. But though it be all theſe, yet 'tis alſo more, theſe not reaching the Latitude of the word ἐπιείκεια, nor the extent of the duty here enjoyned; the word being not uſed here in that ſtrict ſenſe the Philoſophers uſe it (as the learned *Grotius* well obſerves upon the place): but for that equalneſs of Mind and Spirit that becomes us in our converſation, and diffuſeth it ſelf through many, very many other actions, than are proper to theſe Virtues: and though ſometimes reſtrained to this, or that particular kind of Moderation, yet in its latitude (as the beſt Philologers tell us) denotes *Mediocrity*, *Indifferency*, *Equality*, or the like. And in this general acception, which I may call the *Moral or Theological Senſe*, not reſtraining it to (though not excluding) the *forinſical* or ſtricter acceptation thereof, I ſhall through Gods aſſiſtance handle it; The rather, becauſe our Judicious and Learned *Perkins*, hath in a peculiar little Tractate already ſpoken ſufficiently to that particular, of the Moderation of Juſtice by the Magiſtrate, and private perſons, in reference to their remitting from the rigour of the Law; which every one may peruſe, and I ſeriouſly wiſh they would alſo practiſe.

Μέτριοι, ἐπιεικεῖς. Heſych. ἐπιεικῶς σημαίνει τὸ μετρίως. Etym. ἐπιεικῶς μετρίως. Suid. τῶν τέτων μετριότητα, &c. i. e. ἐπιείκειαν. *Scoliaſt. in lib.* 1. Thucyd.

2. General now follows; *The exerciſe of Moderation*, wherein the caſe propoſed is included, *viz.* The exerciſe of Moderation.

Caſe, *Wherein muſt we practiſe Moderation?*

Which neceſſarily implies the *external object*, or about what our Moderation muſt be converſant, and appear to all; call it the *object* of the *Faculty* or of the *Action*, or of *Moderation*, when imployed in governing theſe, and ſo hath the ſame object with them (as is ſaid before), it all comes to one.

And formally includes, 1. *What it is that we muſt Moderate*; or the *faculty*, or *principle*, of what kind ſoever, internal and external, from which the action flows. 2. *In what Actions*. And 3. *How*, or the meaſure and proportion to be obſerved in ſuch our actions. Which three are always diſtinct in themſelves, though not always eaſily diſtinguiſhable to us, and therefore often ſeem coincident. I ſhall therefore joyn them together in the proſecution of the Caſe.

For

For the general Object of Moderation, or about what it must be exercised and appear. Negatively.

1. *Not such things as are materially good.* About such things, or in such actions as are materially good, Moderation hath no place, because all the good we can possibly do, is too little; so that there can be no excess in these, and therefore no Moderation: for the Office of Moderation being to restrain excess; where there can be none of this, that can have no imployment, *e. g.* we cannot believe in, hope, love God and Christ too much, nor hate sin and Satan (as the School-men affirm) in regard of his wholly losing the Image of God, too much. In all our internal religious duties, and actings of Grace, as such, no Moderation therefore can or ought to have place.

2. *Not about such things as are materially evil.* For herein we cannot be defective. Where the object is absolutely forbidden us, and no circumstances can make the action good, there we are wholly to abstain, or suppress the action, if in it, there being inordinacy in the principle or faculty; for though Moderation is to govern even the principle, yet not in the choice of its object, but in its exercise about a due object chosen, that it exceed not. And though we call any great acting upon an undue object, or great omission towards due, immoderate, because of their excess, yet this is not properly immoderacy, for so every sin would be it formally, whereas those only which respect the moral quantity of our actions, are properly immoderacies. Both these sufficiently appear by what's said before.

Positively. But about such things as are in themselves of an indifferent nature, and neither absolutely commanded, as things materially good, or absolutely forbidden, as those materially evil; but only conditionally, according to the circumstances we are in. Which though of an indifferent nature, yet become morally good or evil to us, as we are actually conversant about them. In these properly may be excess, in regard of which Moderation is to take place to restrain, and keep all within due bounds, being formally the *modification* (to use the School-term for once) of such actions. Wherein we must carefully distinguish of the several formalities of the object, Grace and Nature being conversant about the same object, but not in the same respect.

For its exercise therefore, or what, wherein, and how we must practise it.

Which I shall speak of, 1. Absolutely, in reference to our selves, for preserving peace within, as it is to be exercised towards the good and evils of this life.

2. Relatively, or in relation to others, for external peace, wherein we must exercise it in *Civil* and in *Religious matters*. The former I shall call *Moderation towards Things*, the latter *towards Persons*.

1. *Moderation towards Things.*

1. *First then for Moderation towards Things*, as it is absolutely taken in

in reference to our ſelves: this being ſo clearly injoyned in the Text, as appears not only by the word ἐπιείκεια, but the duty γνωσθήτω; The Apoſtle not ſaying, uſe Moderation *towards* all men, but let it appear *to* all men, which even that which is internal doth in our external converſation. But though there be abundance of excellent fruit on this branch of Moderation; yet in regard I conceive that *towards Perſons* principally intended, I will not ſtand to ſhake it down, but only point you out briefly the boughs on which it eſpecially grows, that you may gather it your ſelves, and proceed to the ſecond, *Moderation towards others*, which I ſhall only proſecute afterwards in all the following diſcourſe. Now the *good things* of this life being either *internal*, of the Mind, as Parts, Learning, *&c.* of the Body, as Health, Strength, Beauty, and the like: or *External*, as the Riches, Honours, Relations, and lawful pleaſures of the World, and what comprehended under them: And the *evils* of this life, ſuch as are contrary to theſe, as ſhallowneſs of Parts natural or acquired, Sickneſs, Weakneſs, Death, Deformity, Poverty, loſſes of Friends or Eſtate, Infamy, Reproaches, Troubles, Wars, Hunger, Thirſt, Nakedneſs, Impriſonment, Captivity, Baniſhment, and ſuch like: we are towards theſe to exerciſe Moderation.

2. *Towards the good things of this life.* 1. *We muſt moderate our Judgments in the valuation of them.* As forbidden fruit muſt not be looked upon, ſo lawful muſt not be judged by us more deſirable than it is. As we may not undervalue theſe good things, and with the *Stoick* deſpiſe and caſt them away; ſo we muſt not overvalue them, beyond their intrinſick worth, and the ends for which God allows them; the end and uſe being the meaſure of every things eſtimation. For though every creature be good in it ſelf, and ſome better in themſelves, and to us, than others: yet thoſe that are the beſt, and beſt for us that the World affords, are ſtill but creatures, who are moſt of them ſerviceable only to our bodies, that they may be ſerviceable to our Souls, in the ſervice of our Heavenly Father: which when we too much eſtimate, we quickly fall to admire, and ſo bow down to them, and commit Idolatry with them. For an over-valuation of the Judgment, begets in us admiration, and ſo an over-valuation of them alſo in our affections. Theſe ſenſitive objects make ſuch impreſſions upon our imagination when abſent, and our paſſions when preſent, that if Grace and Reaſon moderate not our Judgment of them, our whole man becomes inflamed therewith, and violently carried out towards them, by an exceſſive admiration of their ſeeming excellency, love to them for the ſame, and deſire after them, for their apprehended ſuitableneſs, hope to obtain them, ſeeming poſſible, uſing means for obtaining them, and delighting and glorying in them. Therefore our Saviour preſcribes wiſely, that our hearts may not be in them, the light of our minds being ſingle, *Matt.* 6. 22, 23. When *Achan* (Joſh. 7. 21.) judged the Babyloniſh Garment *goodly*, and the Silver and Gold, then he quickly coveted and took them. Let thy Moderation therefore begin here, and conſider the character *Solomon* upon good experience gives them, that they are all

to

to us in this degenerate state, *Vanity of Vanities*, yea, *vexation of Spirit.*

2. *Moderate thy will and affections, in their love, desires, hopes, after the getting or keeping these things; according to the ends for which God allows them thee in particular, and with subordination to his pleasure and Providence in the event.* We must value, love, desire God and Christ, and hope in them absolutely and for themselves, the Grace absolutely, but for the injoyment of them (and consequently for our own happiness); but so must we not these things, but only conditionally, as God in his All-wise disposing Providence sees meet to dispense to us, (he having so only promised them, and for those ends and so far forth as they are *convenient for us*, according to *Agars* desire, *Prov.* 30. 8. Which conveniency is to be measured by the estate the Providence of God hath set us in, and the circumstances wherein we are. As so much health, strength, refreshment, comfortableness in our lives, as God sees good for us, and may render us serviceable to him; so much Food, Raiment, Profit, Pleasure, as he pleaseth to bestow, and so far forth as convenient for us, according to our present condition, for our health, and other ends now mentioned, to which they refer; but neither these nor any other good things of this life absolutely, or for themselves, so as to make them our end and happiness, or to be fuel for our lusts, must we either love, desire, or hope for. It is not thus the desiring the lawful pleasures, profits, honours of this life, which St. *John* speaks of, 1 *Joh.* 2. 16; but the immoderacy of the desiring them which he calls *lust*, and saith *it is of the World*; as well he may, seeing this is the Trinity that it generally worshippeth more than the blessed Trinity of Heaven. Is it not the cry of many, nay most, *Who will shew us any good?* but of how few, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us?* Psal. 4. 6. How do men grasp at these things in their desires, which are as boundless as the Ocean, as craving as the Horseleach daughters still crying, *Give give*; as unsatiable as the Grave; and as unsatisfied as Hell and Destruction, towards which they are travelling. What *Libanius* observed so long since, (and 'tis worth the observing) holds as true at this day. It's difficult, saith he, to meet with a man satisfied, and not complaining of his condition. If he want any bodily good, as Beauty, Strength, *&c.* or, if none of these, yet not thankful; if he want some of the mind, if he be not an Oratour, Physitian, skilful Commander, or the like. And especially in Riches and Honours. He that hath one Field, would have, and complains if he have not two; he that hath two, for four; he that hath ten, for twenty; and he that hath twenty, twice so many; and so on, no number satisfying his desire. For though it be great before, when we enjoy any thing, it then seems small to us; as one thousand Talents of Gold, when we have them, are small to two, and two to ten, and so on. In Honours likewise, he that governs a City is not satisfied, because he governs not the Nation; and if the Nation, that no more; as *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Xerxes*, mighty Princes, yet they wanted *Greece* they thought, which caused their expeditions against it. Thus passing by

λόγος γαστρὸς ἀπλησίας.

by ſtill what we have, and reckoning what we have not, never think we enjoy enough. Ἀδικῶν ἐν ἀδικούμενος, every one herein being injurious to God, not injuriouſly dealt with by him. Keep therefore thy heart, and moderate it, that it break not out in theſe things, with all diligence, leſt the ſwarms of theſe luſts, what ever ſweetneſs they ſeem to bring with them, ſting thee to death.

3. *Moderate thy purſuit and endeavours after the acquiring and retaining theſe, by the ends for which, and ſubordination wherewith thou mayeſt and oughteſt deſire them.* This ſpeaking only the execution of the former particular, muſt needs be accordingly bounded. What we may lawfully deſire, that we may uſe lawful means to attain; and ſo far forth as we muſt deſire, ſo far only muſt we uſe the means. We muſt ſeek the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs abſolutely, and in the firſt place; then the things convenient for us in this life, according to their ſubſerviency thereto, and his ſeeing good to beſtow upon us. As it is the Statute-Law of Heaven, that *in the ſweat of our brows we ſhould eat our bread*; and ſhould be our daily prayer, that our *Father which is in Heaven* would *give us this day our daily bread*, i. e. all things requiſite and convenient; So is it that we ſhould *not lay up for our ſelves treaſures upon earth*, nor ſerve theſe as *our Maſters*, nor *take thought for our lives, what we ſhall eat, or what we ſhall drink, or wherewithall we ſhall be cloathed* (which three are the total ſum, all theſe externals amounts to in their uſe) *Matt.* 6. 19, 24, 25, &c. Our bleſſed Saviour from the 19th verſe of that Chapter, forbidding this immoderate purſuit in thoſe negative precepts, which he preſſeth with ſeveral cogent arguments and expoſtulations; and not abſolutely, but ſo as they may be not our *Treaſures* that we ſet our hearts upon, our *Maſters* that we ſerve, when as they are but our Servants, and ſo as that we oppoſe them not to, and ſet them in competition with the *Treaſures in Heaven*; and God our great *Maſter*, whom we ought to ſerve even in the following our imployments for theſe; as appears, *verſ.* 19, and 24. nor abſolutely our taking thought, but our too ſollicitouſneſs about the choice of, and uſing means, and eſpecially their event, and ſo conſequently what ſhall becomes of us, if we be not bleſt but blaſted therein, as appears by the word μεριμνᾶτε, in the laſt verſe of the Chapter. And yet (alas!) after all this, how do we ſeek them as if they were our treaſure, our happineſs, our *all?* as if here was our continuing City, wherein we ſhould always live, and have theſe treaſures, and none other to come that hath better? Though theſe be things after which *the Gentiles ſeek*, yet they will be excuſable who know no better in compariſon of thee and me, who know the true Pearl of price, are invited and called to better dainties, and yet make light thereof, one preferring his Farm, another his Merchandiſe, *Matt.* 22. 5. And yet though the generality of the *Gentiles* which had not the Goſpel, as the *Jews* in our Saviours time, were ſo immoderate; yet many of them were ſuch as appears by their works, and lives, as I fear will riſe up in Judgment in this particular, againſt moſt of us that call our ſelves *Chriſtians*. They beholding the buſie World (as one of them

ſpeaks of the Souls in the other) as the Ant carrying a ſtraw, or ſome little thing of like moment, into her hole in the Mole-hill; which yet dazels our eyes with their ſeeming luſter, and makes our hearts ſay of theſe our houſes, as if they were our homes, *'Tis good for us to be here.*

4. *We muſt moderate our whole man in the uſe and enjoyment of theſe, in our loving, delighting, rejoycing and glorying in them.* We muſt not in our uſing of them, exceeding the bounds within which they are allowed us; nor in our love towards them, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World,* by taking too much complacency and delight in them; not our rejoycing, *Eccleſ.* 11. 9, If thou doſt, know, *for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment.* Nay, our Saviour when the Diſciples *returned with joy that the Devils were ſubject to them,* Luk. 10. 17, which was a divine and extraordinary gift, calls them off, and ſhews them a fit matter of rejoycing, wherein they could not exceed; not abſolutely forbidding, but limiting them with a *rather, but rather rejoyce that your names are written in Heaven,* ver. 20. Nor in our glorying in them, *Jer.* 9. 23, 24. O what need of moderation here! In our eating, drinking, ſleeping, lawful recreations, rayment; in the uſing of our parts, Learning, Riches, Honours, and other Creature-comforts! if the enjoyment of theſe outward things had been ſo conſiderable, think you our bleſſed Saviour, who could have commanded them, would have wanted them? What are the beſt of them? Are thy Riches any thing, but of the Earth, and earthly? Thy pleaſures any thing, but a little titillation of the fleſh, of no permanent nature, lives but one inſtant, and dies as faſt? Thy Honour any thing, beſides a hollow eccho, or noiſe, that like the circle of the water, is but of little circumference, and ſoon gone? doth not every croſs wind, or wave, break and daſh it away? Is not he that's great in this City, ſcarce known in the next? He that's King in one Nation, unknown to many other Nations? How ſhort lived, I pray? Have there not been many great ones we never heard of? Thoſe we read, do we not skip their names often, not troubling our ſelves with the thought or remembrance of them? If we do, what are they the better? *Pſal.* 103. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. Nay, have not the greateſt judgments of God followed exceſs in things lawful? I will trouble you with none but a few Scriptural Examples: Two of the greateſt the world ever knew, the Flood, and deſtruction of *Sodom,* and the reſt of the Cities of the Plain; to what are they aſcribed but Security and Exceſs? *They did eat, they drank, they married Wives, they were given in marriage:* What follows? *the Flood came and deſtroyed them all,* Luk. 17. 27. *Likewiſe in the days of* Lot, *they did eat, they drank, they bought, they ſold, they planted, they builded,* (all again things lawful in themſelves) *but the ſame day that* Lot *went out of* Sodom *it rained fire and brimſtone from Heaven, and deſtroyed them all,* ver. 28, 29. If *David* took too much Pride and Glory in the number of his People, and fell to numbring them, God quickly follows with Peſtilence, and makes them decreaſe ſeventy thouſand, 1 *Chron.* 21. 14. If *Nebuchadnezzar* will

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vaunt, *Is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* While the word is in his mouth, there falls a voice from Heaven, *The Kingdom is departed from thee*, and he is turned to grass with the Oxen, *Dan.* 4. 30, 33. And his Son *Belshazzars* great Feast fills up the measure, for which he was that night slain, and his Kingdom taken, *Dan.* 5. 1, 30, 31. If the rich man will think thus, and so will I do and say, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry:* He is not only stigmatized for a *fool*, but *this night shall thy soul be required of thee* follows, *Luk.* 12. 19, 20. Nay, if the wicked Servant begin to *eat and drink with the drunken*, his Lord will come unexpectedly, *and cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the Hypocrites*, *Matt.* 24. 49, 51. How great then this sin is, Gods Judgments being always equal, and proportioned to our offences, what slight thoughts soever we may have of it, you cannot but by these Examples perceive; Nay rather, what a big-bellied Monster is it? full of many deadly sins, of *Atheism*, *Unbelief*, *Idolatry*, *Carnal security*, preferring these things before God, Christ, Heaven, and Happiness. Take heed, and beware therefore herein, lest while they speak thee fair, they wound thy heart.

2. *Towards the evils of this life*; 1. *We must moderate our fears of these befalling us, according to the good they threaten to deprive us of.* As we must not fear these groundlesly, so when there is just cause, and apparent danger, we should not be senseless and secure, nor fear all alike, or over-fear; any security is the fore-runner to destruction, 1 *Thess.* 5. 3, which these should awake us out of, but not so affect us, or affright us, as to put us past our selves and our duty; when the storm threatens us, we must not with *Jonah* be asleep, but praying and indeavouring, as the poor Mariners for preservation; Or as the Disciples, *Lord save us, we perish*; though they were too fearful, in regard of Christ's being with them, who was sufficient security for their safety. There is a *provident fear*, that opens our eyes to foresee dangers, and quickens us in the use of lawful means for their prevention; such was the good Patriarch *Jacob*'s, of *Esau*, his destroying him and his company; that makes him pray, send presents to his brother, divide his bands, and use all prudent means of preservation, *Gen.* 32, this we must have: for security and putting far away the evil day, when God threatens us, even with temporal Judgments, is a great sin, and hath a *Wo* pronounced upon it, *Amos* 6, whereas this makes us wisely serve the Providence of God. But then there is a *diffident fear* that distracts us, and cuts all the nerves and sinews of lawful care and endeavours, that brings a snare with it, (*Prov.* 29. 25), and often drives us upon unwarrantable means, or makes us sit down in despair. This we must beware of, by a due moderating our fears according to the impendent evil, which must be judged by its opposite *good*. Not fearing all evils alike; the loss of some wealth, like the loss of our health, because health is the better good; no nor all evils of the same kind alike; not a Tertian Ague like

the Stone; this by its exquiſite pain, depriving us more of the natural comfort of health, and more endangering our lives. And not over-fearing the greateſt, *viz. Death*, called by *Job, the King of Terrors*, (15. and 14.) and by the Philoſophers, φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of all terribles, the moſt terrible*; which our Saviour, as a man, feared with a natural fear, yet chargeth we ſhould not over-fear it, *Matt.* 10. 28. *Luke* 12. 4. Yea, though we ſhould fear political or publick evils, as Wars, Famine, Peſtilence, more than our own perſonal (of which you ſee I ſpeak only all along), in regard thoſe are greater, the publick good being better, and to be preferred before any private, yet not theſe too much.

2. *We muſt moderate our grief and trouble for theſe, according to the good we want or loſe by them.* There are *imaginary evils*, that are of our own creation, begot, brought up, and nouriſhed only by our own brain; theſe we muſt carefully avoid, and if formed, not be cruel to our ſelves, in being compaſſionate to them, but daſh them in pieces. And there are *real evils*, which come not forth of our own duſt, nor ſpring out of the ground, but are from above, of Gods creating and framing, *Amos* 3. 6. *Iſa.* 45. 7. *Jer.* 18. 11. Theſe we are not to be ſenſleſs under, but duly affected with, and yet not over-affected, ſo as to murmur and repine, much leſs quarrel with God. A Stoical Apathy becomes us not, and yet better than quarrelling at Gods Providence, it coming nearer *moderation*; for *wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin?* Lam. 3. 39. Little reaſon, whilſt thou art living, ſeeing it is leſs than thy deſert; and no reaſon even for Death and Hell, for they are but equal to thy deſert; if thou confeſs thy ſelf a ſinner, thou muſt confeſs this. *Plato* ſaith, that God doth ἀεὶ γεωμετρῶν, which is expounded by *Plutarch*, well; That God is ſaid always to act the Geometrician, in regard of his equal dealing with all men, in proportioning rewards and puniſhments to their deſerts: And a greater than he, yea, the greateſt that can be, God himſelf, appeals to the ſinners own Conſcience, *Is not my way equal? Are not your ways unequal?* Ezek. 18. which whole Chapter is a defence of his equity. Troubled then we may be, murmuring and diſcontented we muſt not be. Nay, troubled we ought to be, as the evils are greater or leſs, which muſt be judged by the good they deprive us of; more for publick, becauſe that good is greater; leſs for private evils, becauſe our own good is not equal to the Communities. But in the body-politick 'tis quite otherwiſe than in the natural body; we are uſually too ſenſleſs under publick, and too ſenſible of, and immoderate under our own particular evils: rather apt to quarrel with God, like *Jonah*, for a *Gourd*, or ſome inconſiderable concerns of our own, than be troubled at the deſtruction of a great *Nineveh*; more troubled at our own houſes being on fire, or Child ſick, than all our Neighbours in the City about us burnt and dead. Therefore Scripture accordingly calls for affection for the Publick, and forbids it in our own concernments, in regard we are generally defective in the former, and exceſſive in the latter: Nay, even towards others, when juſt cauſe of compaſſion, if exceſſive. So our Saviour, when the Women lamented his

Sympoſ. l. 8. Q. 2.

his death, (which was matter of grief, as in reſpect of him, though of greateſt joy in it ſelf, as to them and the World) bids them, *Weep not for me, but for your ſelves, and your Children,* in regard of the publick calamities that were coming upon *Jeruſalem,* Matt. 23. 27, 28, 29. Every particular being concerned in the Community. Now of theſe evils, ſeeing all are privations of good; *Some are of the good we want, and never enjoyed,* as deformity of body, defect in parts, conſtant poverty, *&c.* and here we muſt beware we judg not thoſe evils, which are none, and ſo trouble and torment our ſelves without cauſe, and reproach our *Maker,* ſaying, *Why hath he made me thus?* Why am I no nobler born, no more beautiful made, no greater Heir, no quicker parted? Why am I not as ſuch, or ſuch, not as they, this or that? When thou haſt what is ſutable and convenient for thy condion; for this all may ſay of thoſe that excel them (and the beſt of imaginary excellencies) as well as thou. *Other evils are of the good we have enjoyed, and are deprived of;* as want of health, loſſes of Friends and Eſtate, reproaches of our good name, impriſonment of liberty, and the like, which are incident to our preſent ſtate. Theſe are they eſpecially which the World lament, and cry out after, as fooliſhly as *Micah* (*Judg.* 18. 14), *Ye have taken away our Gods, and what have we more? and ſayeſt thou, what aileth us?* We muſt not here be too paſſionately exceſſive, either in the degree or duration of our trouble; we muſt be affected with the providence of God in theſe evils, according to their greatneſs to us (a little loſs in it ſelf, may be great to a poor man; as the Widows two Mites was more to her, than their far greater ſums was to them that caſt them in; the death of an only Child greater than when a number); and ſo trouble and ſorrow for them, but diſcontented we muſt not be, nor diſtracted in the duties God requires; nor refuſe to be comforted, becauſe our Husbands, Wives, Children, Pleaſures, Honours, Riches are not; for as there is a time to weep, ſo a time to take up, and refrain from weeping; we muſt love them ſo, as we may loſe them, that when we do, we may not loſe our ſelves, *Amavi hæc omnia tanquam amiſſurus,* let us every one ſay at parting with them, I loved you ſo as I can loſe you. Take heed of murmuring with the *Iſraelites,* curſing thy Stars with the prophane; of diſcontentedneſs, which the beſt are apt to fall into; nay, wiſh for death rather than life, as ſeveral of the Prophets. Maintain that equilibrious frame in thee, (as *David,* 2 Sam. 15, 26), *Here I am, let God do to me as ſeemeth good to him,* which is the Mother of *patience,* and like it, makes theſe evils (though not one, yet become) none to us.

Thus I have done with *moderation towards things,* moſt of whoſe particulars mentioned, you have preſt by the Apoſtle *Paul,* and by the ſame Argument of the Text, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31, *The time is ſhort. It remaineth that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none: and they that weep, as though they wept not: and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not: and they that buy, as though they poſſeſſed not: and they that uſe this World, as not abuſing it: for the faſhion of this World paſſeth away.* And though I have ſtood longer upon this than I intended, and

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promiſed both you and my ſelf, in regard the fruit hung ſo thick about me, that I could not but pluck ſome of it; and after I had taſted it, more; yet I hope it will prove ſo pleaſant alſo to the taſte, that you will pardon me; eſpecially conſidering how much this Moderation towards things conduceth to that which reſpects perſons; (the contentions in the World ariſing uſually from our want of Moderation to the things of the World, as in civil matters it is patent; and in religious, though leſs obvious, yet moſt frequently as certain, that theſe are the ſprings from which they flow) and how neceſſary it is for us all to know and practiſe it; for *licitis perimus omnis*, we uſually periſh by the hand of theſe lawful things.

2. *Moderation towards perſons.*

Having ſpoken of Moderation, as it reſpect our ſelves, for preſerving peace within, (this, as all Government, having *peace* for its end) which appears, and is made known to others by our Converſation; let us now look abroad, as we are members of the publick, and have to do with others, and ſee what Moderation we muſt uſe for the preſerving *external peace*. Now each Chriſtian having a double capacity; as a *Man*, his civil capacity in the *State*; as a *Chriſtian*, his religious capacity in the Church wherein he lives: I ſhall ſpeak to both theſe, in reference to Peace *Political* and *Eccleſiaſtical*; to the former more briefly, being ſo near a kin to that part we have already diſpatched.

1. *In civil matters.*

Herein we may be conſidered, *Actively* or *Paſſively*. 1. *Actively. We muſt moderate our ſpeeches, that we give no juſt provocation thereby, according to prudence.* That we may neither provoke thoſe of whom, or to whom we ſpeak; we muſt duly conſider the nature of the matter we ſpeak of, and the quality and temper of the perſons concerned.

In our diſcourſes with others; not trifling in weighty matters, and fervent in trifles of no moment; nor raſhly to thy Superiors, without reſpect, not ſuperciliouſly to thy Inferiors, not contentiouſly to thy equals; we alſo muſt have regard to their temper, if paſſionate and angry, with ſoft, not grievous words; or if tender and meek-ſpirited, with the like, (for theſe two different tempers muſt be alike, though for different ends dealt withall); if contumacious, more ſharply; if flexible, gently; if teaſty or jealous, more tenderly and cautiouſly; if equal, with more freedom and liberty; and ſo of all others. Yea, we muſt alſo obſerve their preſent condition, if diſtreſſed, or joyful and comfortable, and the like; and the diſpoſition they are in, (which for the moſt part is ſuitable thereto) as ſad and dejected, or chearful and pleaſant, beyond their accuſtomed temper, and accordingly moderate our ſpeeches, as the wiſe Man adviſeth, *Prov.* 25. 20. At no time ſtirring up contention, or ſpeaking Swords and Darts, but as the Wiſe, whoſe *tongue is health*, Prov. 18. 6. & 12. 18.

In our judging, characterizing, and cenſuring of others; we muſt alſo conſider

conſider for what, of whom, and to whom we do it; not for every failing, and weakneſs, or miſcarriage, nor upon ſlight grounds; not readily taking up a reproach againſt our Neighbour, and raſhly venting it, *Prov.* 10. 12, nor jealouſly framing one, and according thereto paſſing verdict: for though there be a charitable and godly jealouſie, we may exerciſe towards thoſe we have ſpecial intereſt in, or charge over, ſuch as St. *Paul*'s towards his *Corinthians*, (2 *Cor.* 11. 2.) and *Job* his Children, (*ch.* 1. 5.) in reference to our admoniſhing, or other dealings with them; yet not to our judging and cenſuring them to others. And when the carriages of others are ſuch as no due candor can excuſe, we muſt rather interpret them better, than aggravate them as worſe, according to the favour of charity to the Offender, though in no wiſe to the Offence. Nor this without neceſſity, nor to every one blazoning others, nor of all alike, without reſpect to quality, age, temptations, and the like; of which, and all other circumſtances, conſideration muſt be had, and due allowance made.

In our rebuking and reproving of others; we muſt likewiſe ſee, that it be a matter ſo deſerving, and conſider the perſons we ſo deal with (In counſel and admonition, though prudence be required, yet in them we aſſume not ſo much to our ſelves, nor apt ſo paſſionately to miſcarry). Great need of this in Superiors, Maſters eſpecially towards Servants, and Scholars, that they deal with them according to their diſpoſitions, *forbearing* (or as the Greek, *moderating*) *threatning*, Epheſ. 6. 9. and *Prov.* 11. 24. and Parents often towards Children; *Fathers, provoke not your Children, leſt they be diſcouraged*, Coloſ. 3. 21. And as great need of Superiors moderating their paſſion towards Inferiors, ſo great need of theſe uſing prudence towards thoſe and their equals; *Rebuke not* (therefore ſaith *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 5. 1.) *an Elder, but intreat him as a Father, and the younger men as Brethren.*

2. *We muſt moderate our conteſts with others according to equity*, So long as ſin, Satan, and *meum & tuum, thine and mine*, are in the World, there will be ſtrife and contention about the things of the World. And where intereſt ingages, we are ſubject to be byaſt thereby, and drawn away by our paſſions from all equality. Great need therefore of Moderation here: [1. *In conſidering the matter, that it be of moment, and the perſon we have to do withal, whether faulty*; and not about toys, and raſhly with any that's next us we think upon the bluſh guilty, enter the liſts of contention and ſtrife. *Go not forth haſtily* (ſaith *Solomon*) *to ſtrive, leſt thou knoweſt not what to do in the end thereof, when thy Neighbour hath put thee to ſhame*, Prov. 25. 8. [2. If ſo, *In trying by all fair means the obtaining thy right*, whether of eſtate, good name, honour, or the like, by arguments and perſwaſions, by ſeeking accommodation, by willingly referring it to the equal judgment and determination of others, or the like. *Agree* (ſaith our bleſſed Saviour, *Mat.* 5. 25.) *with thine adverſary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him* (i. e. *to the Magiſtrate*, as *Luke* expounds it, 12. 58.) *leſt at any time the adverſary deliver thee to the Judg, and the Judg deliver thee to the Officer,*

Officer, and thou be caſt into Priſon. [3. If theſe will not prevail for thy right, *In voluntary yielding ſome part thereof, rather than conteſt.* It muſt be thy own right thou muſt yield, not anothers, (except thou be intruſted therewith, and ſo far forth as he conſents thereto); for this being a Gift, muſt be of ſuch things as our own, which thou oughteſt to do for peace-ſake. How eminent was *Abraham* for this, (*Gen.* 13. 8, 9.) who ſtood not upon his terms of ſuperiority with *Lot*, though his Unkle and Guardian formerly, and Governour; nor his right, nor his Nephews firſt ſeeking to him, and the like; but that there might be no ſtrife, offers him his choice of the Land; *If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left;* and performs accordingly. How far are we from following our Father *Abraham's* example! how many that will not yield others any of their right, but by compulſion of Law! how few that yields their own right voluntarily! How far, or how much we muſt yield, our own, and thoſe we deal with, circumſtances beſt determine. We muſt not be injurious to our ſelves; for as St. *Auſtin* ſaith well, *Quis aliis æquus, qui ſibi iniquus? Who that's unequal to himſelf, will be equal to others?* We muſt not yield that which is greatly to our detriment, except our yielding be on as eaſie terms as further conteſting, (as it proves often when we proceed to Law, *&c.*) and here that may be very conſiderable to one, that is but ſmall to another, as poorer or richer, for matters of eſtate, as entring the ſtage of the World, or well known in it, for credit and good name, *&c.* And very conſiderable to the ſame man at one time, that may be ſmall at another, as if upon preferment to have reports made of him, or the like. Nay, there may be grounds for not yielding the leaſt we can poſſibly obtain, which we muſt conceal from the Publick, (though we may ſatisfie private Chriſtians) as when we know our eſtate is ſmall, though (living upon credit) others judg it great, or the like caſes. But here's not ſuch difficulty, every one knowing his own circumſtances, for the moſt part, pretty well, (which ſhould be a ground for our charity, that we cenſure not men whoſe circumſtances we know not); nor are we apt to miſcarry in departing from our own intereſt. We ſhould eſpecially therefore conſider the condition and circumſtances thoſe are in we have to do withall: If greater, we uſually make a vertue of neceſſity, and yield moſt where we ſhould yield leaſt; but here, in our ſpeeches and carriages, we ſhould eſpecially yield, and leaſt we can of our purſes, and on the contrary, if they be meaner and poorer. Not when others are low, or in preſent exigencies, to take them by the throat, ſaying, Pay me what thou oweſt, (*Mat.* 18. 28.) but to be equal, merciful, and conſiderative of others as well as our ſelves, and accordingly to deal. 4. If all thou muſt yield will not ſatisfie, *In thy chargeable appeal to the Civil Magiſtrate.* As all lawful means muſt be aſſayed for publick Peace, before by War appeal be made to God; ſo ſhould all lawful means be uſed before we appeal to his Vice-gerent, for private peace. And when we do, with charity to the perſon againſt whom we proceed; for 'tis a great miſtake to think

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we cannot be in Charity and Law together. And though, with vigilance and circumſpection, yet not with violence and paſſion to mannage the proſecution. Laſtly, *In the iſſue or event of Appeals.* If we overcome, *In admitting equal compenſation for the loſs of Riches, Credit, or the like thou conteſts about.* For ſome mens natures, others neceſſities, are ſuch as make them obſtinate, and perſiſt to their ruine and deſtruction; and Laws in ſome things are ſevere, (though juſt) which though the Magiſtrate moderate according to equity, yet often adjudg more than we ſhould take. And if thou be overcome and loſe thy right; by no means ſeek revenge, or right thy ſelf, but uſe Moderation, *in committing thy Cauſe to him that judgeth righteouſly.*

3. *We muſt moderate our whole carriage and converſation towards others, according to the rules of modeſty and ſobriety,* Prov. 25. 6. Avoid all occaſions of giving juſt offence to others. Seek peace, and purſue it, but fly occaſions of quarrelling and ſtrife, leſt the wrath both of God and man purſue thee. Conſider that not only *hatred* and *wrath*, but *variance, emulation*, and *ſtrife*, are reckoned amongſt the works of the fleſh, which *they that do, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God:* whiles *peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, and meekneſs, (fruits of the Spirit)* ſhall, *Gal.* 5. 20. —23. Let not thy immodeſt looks efface others modeſty, nor thy geſtures offend their gravity. For St. *Ambroſe* extends this Moderation to geſtures, gate, and bodily motions; ſpeaking alſo his own experience herein, how he refuſed to admit one into Orders, meerly for his immodeſty in theſe. Let not then any taunting Jeſts, bitter Sarcaſms, or any other words, or mymical Geſtures, fooliſh Wagers, Recreations, or the like, become ſnares to entrap thy peace with others. *Finally, Brethren, whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt,* (or grave and venerable σεμνὰ) *whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praiſe, think on theſe things,* ſpeak theſe things, do theſe things, *and the God of Peace ſhall be with you,* Phil. 4. 8, 9. Offic. l. 1. c. 18.

2. *Paſſively.* Thus we are conſidered in our ſuffering from others; wherein, as we muſt cordially forgive them all, *Matt.* 6. 15. So in our carriage, we muſt moderate our Spirits, Paſſions, Speeches, Actions, and puniſhing thereof, towards thoſe that are the offenders.

1. *We muſt moderate our ſpirits, by an equal bearing with the weakneſſes and natural infirmities of others. He that hath no rule over his own ſpirit, is like a City that is broken down, and without Walls,* Prov. 25. 28. *i.e.* ſoon overcome. We muſt conſider their years, as the fervor of youth, teſtineſs of old age, their temper: ſome are more dull and flegmatick, others more melancholly and ſuſpicious; ſome more cholerick and boyſterouſly paſſionate, others more agil quick and ſprightly: their Education, ſome are with ſtudy moroſe, others, according to thoſe they converſe with, more rude, or complemental and courtly; according to which, and their preſent condition, we ſhould give due grains of allowance, in our ſpeeches and converſations towards them, and retain our equality of mind, as the Orator ſaid, *Tranquillus animus meus, qui*

æqui boni facit omnia, [1. By a prudent diſſembling them, 1 *Sam.* 10.27. [2. By a charitable covering them, *Prov.* 10. 12. [3. Interpreting them; not putting any ſiniſter interpretation, but moſt favourable, not aggravating the offence, 1 *Cor.* 13. 5, & 7. [4. Admoniſhing them, *Matt.* 18. 15. Gal. 6. 1. | Laſtly, Pardoning them; *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one onother,* &c. *Coloſ.* 3. 13.

2. *We muſt moderate our paſſions in their due exerciſe, in caſe of greater, and wilful offences, according to the nature and quality thereof.* Our anger towards ſuch Offenders, averſation of them, ſeverity with them, and the like; avoiding of, and ſuppreſſing all wrath, envy, malice, revenge, and the like ſinful paſſions, that have the ſtamp of Hell upon them, (*Jam.* 3. 15.) which come thence, and lead thither, *Gal.* 5. 20, & 21. In Gods cauſe we muſt be angry, againſt ſin; and in publicks, againſt the impediments of peace and truth, *Neh.* 5. 6. *Acts* 17. 16. (but theſe I am not ſpeaking of) in our own we may be angry, but we muſt not ſin, *Epheſ.* 4. 26. *Whoſoever is angry with his Brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the Judgment,* ſaith our bleſſed Saviour, *Matt.* 5. 22. In which three things are conſiderable. 1. With whom, and that's clearly the Offenders, not every one that's next us. 2. For what, Which the Philoſopher, and all acknowledg, difficult to determine, being in particulars; the only help is from the conſideration of the quality of the offence. 1. Not for every trifle, but material in its ſelf, or in its conſequence. 2. Not for natural defects and weakneſſes, as when they are ſlow of parts, weak of ſtrength, or the like, and can do no better; (here we may find fault, and admoniſh gently to quicken, not be angry, to diſcourage thoſe we have power over, or intereſt in). 3. Nor for purely involuntary, and caſual offences, ſuch as no due circumſpection could prevent, but for errors and miſtakes which might have been avoided, careleſneſs and negligence in the doing or omiſſion; wilfulneſs or maliciouſneſs in the end for which others offend us. When theſe appear, and as they appear more or leſs, we may be angry; leaſt for the firſt, more with the next, and moſt with the laſt of wilfulneſs and malice. Laſtly, The meaſure of our paſſion is conſiderable, which muſt not be beyond the nature of ſuch offences, in the degree or duration. *Be angry, and ſin not,* (the ſame words in the Original, the *Septuagint* renders, *Pſalm* 4. 4. by, *ſtand in awe, and ſin not*; when we are angry with others, we had need ſtand in awe of God that we ſin not,) *let not the Sun go down upon thy wrath, neither give place to the Devil,* Epheſ. 4. 26, 27, *i.e.* we muſt neither too deeply, nor too long be angry, leſt the Devil, who is ready at hand to take occaſion thereat, to blow us all into a flame of Wrath, Malice, Revenge, and what not; all which are to be wholly avoided.

3. We muſt moderate our ſpeeches and actions towards ſuch wilful Offenders. *By no means rendering railing for railing, or evil for evil, but overcoming evil with good.* Oh that our bleſſed Saviour's known Precept was but as well known in the practice! *Matt.* 7. 44, &c. and that his

his Copy was but writ after by us, how would the World be reformed thereby! If thoſe many places of holy Scripture, of forbearing, and forgiving one another, under the penalty of damnation, were duly believed, they would marvellouſly reſtrain men at leaſt, and becalm the World. But let's ſee our practice.

1. *By a prudent ſilence, or ſlighting the preſumptuous Offenders of us, when ſecret, or not greatly to our detriment.* Not to hearken or regard every reproach, ſcorn, contempt that's caſt upon us, nor every treſpaſs of our Neighbour, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10, *The diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger, and 'tis his glory to paſs over a tranſgreſſion*, Prov. 19. 11. It is his glory, not only as it ſhews a ſpirit above ſuch dealings, but wiſdom many times more aſhaming and ſilencing ſuch thereby, than by our contending with them.

2. *By yielding to the unequal demands of others for peace, wherein we are ſolely concerned, and not greatly prejudiced.* How eminent is our Saviours example herein, who though free from tribute, yet rather than he would offend, works a Miracle for the ſolution thereof? *Matt.* 17. 27. He fairly ſhews, firſt, that he is ſo, and then notwithſtanding pays, whoſe wiſdom and practice herein let us follow.

3. *By admitting equal compenſation, or leſs than our wrong, for ſuch manifeſt injuries, as we may and ought to right our ſelves in, when the Offender is willing to make us ſatisfaction*: If in our Reputation, let's not inſiſt too much upon the punctilio's of honour; if in eſtate, upon the ſtrict terms of right; but herein obſerve the golden Rule, by putting off *ſelf*, and putting on thy *Neighbour*, doing to him as thou wouldſt he ſhould do to thee, *Matt.* 7. 12. Nay, in real wrongs of eſtate, we ſhould, in caſe of their incapacity of recompencing, accept for preſent verbal ſatisfaction, till they be better inabled; and if never, to loſe all, rather than by impriſonment, or otherwiſe, to bring upon them (and often theirs alſo) utter deſtruction, *Matt.* 18. 29, 30. For the Moraliſt well τὸ δίκαιον ἴσον, but not τὸ ἴσον δίκαιον, though all Juſtice be equal, yet all equality is not Juſtice, but that which is proportioned to perſons. Plut. *Symp.* l. 8.

4. Laſtly, *We muſt moderate our proſecution of ſuch injuries and wrongs, as we ought to vindicate our ſelves from, and ſee puniſhed.* Though we muſt forgive all injuries, as to our ſelves, by charity to others; yet we may, nay, we muſt in ſome caſes have ſo much charity alſo to the Publick, and our ſelves, that in notorious injuries, we ſhould do right to both, in the proſecution of ſuch Offenders as will not otherwiſe be reſtrained, or do us right. If thy Brother ſin againſt thee, not only ſeven, but ſeventy ſeven times a day, thou muſt forgive him, *Matt.* 18. 22. i. e. If he frequently wrong and injure thee, (for ſo the word *ſinning*, when againſt us, ſignifies, as the *Sept.* 1 Sam. 19. 4. Gen. 42. 22. and elſewhere frequently uſe the *Greek* words, ἐὰν ἁμάρτῃ ἕκαστος τῶ πλησίον, *If any man treſpaſs againſt his Neighbour*, that is, injure or wrong him) yet thou muſt conſtantly forgive him; but notwithſtanding thou mayſt ſeek thy right from him, and if by no fair means canſt obtain it, proſecute him

before the Magiſtrate for the ſame. *Nay, thou not only mayſt, but ſometimes muſt.*

1. *When God is concerned therein, as in the Churches right.* Thus *Moſes*, though the meekeſt man upon earth, would *not abate Pharaoh an hoof*, (Exod. 10. 26.) *for thereof muſt we ſerve the Lord*, (ſaith he) *and we know not with what, until we come thither*, i. e. *Canaan*. A Miniſter may yield his own, but he muſt not the Churches right.

2. *In caſe of truſt from others.* Either from the publick, or private perſons, which allow us not to make terms of conceſſion, but ſtand upon ſtrict juſtice and right. Here, ſo far as others conſent, which are proprietors, we ſhould compoſe, yield, and take up controverſies; further we juſtly cannot: for in caſes of truſt, a man muſt be regulated by the will of thoſe that intruſt him, as Arbitrators and Sollicitors for others. So Executors frequently, and Guardians, that are intruſted for thoſe that are young, and not yet, *ſui juris*, at age to conſent, and diſpoſe of their own, and the like caſes, wherein the intruſted are reſponſible for what is not legally done therein; the Laws determination being by all preſumed juſt.

3. *In our own perſonal injuries, wherein the publick is concerned.* 1. When publick Peace, Order and Government, are much violated and broken thereby. As in notorious Thefts, attempts of Murder, and the like; which if tolerated, the World would become a great *Latrocinium*, and Slaughter-houſe, wherein the longeſt Sword, and ſtrongeſt Arm, would ſweep away all; a place for Beaſts, but no quiet habitation for Men. 2. When the publick emolument or eſtimation ſuffers in our injuries. As Magiſtrates, Miniſters, and all others imployed in publick Affairs, when groſly defam'd, ſo as as the Publick is thereby reflected on; ought fairly to vindicate their integrity, ſo far at leaſt, that thoſe that imploy them, and the Publick ſuffer not thereby. And laſtly, When thy ſerving the Publick, and conſequently the publick Good is thereby hindred. How ample is the Apoſtle *Paul* in his own vindication againſt the falſe Apoſtles defamation of him, in his ſecond Apiſtle to the *Corinths*, which is much of it Apologetical? And good reaſon, for where the perſon is traduced, his employment is not likely to be much effectual, or advantagious to the Publick, and his Example leſs; as *Quintilian*, and many others, yea, conſtant experience tells us. In theſe caſes thou muſt do thy ſelf juſtice, but ſo moderately, as not doing to others injuſtice thereby.

L. 2. Inſtit. c. 3.

In all other meerly perſonal wrongs and injuries, when they are conſiderable in themſelves, or their iſſue to *thee*, provided thou canſt no other way obtain right, thou mayſt publickly proſecute thine Injuriors, Oppreſſors, publick Defamers, and the like wrongers of thy Eſtate, Reputation, and other thy temporal good things; in charity, and according to equity, equally ſeeking thy own right and good, not thy Neighbours wrong, much leſs ruine and deſtruction. And thus for Moderation towards others in civil matters.

In

In Religious Matters.

Although I have ſpoken in the opening the nature of Moderation, and the *general Object*, that which might ſerve to direct us herein: Yet leſt I be miſtaken, and thence any of you miſtake your duty; I ſhall further open this *particular Object*, by ſpeaking to it Negatively about what Moderation is not to be practiſed, and poſitively wherein it muſt.

Negatively. 1. *Not in matters of Faith.* For the believing theſe, being not only abſolutely required of every Chriſtian, and in that meaſure that we cannot fully come up to, in regard of the great truth and reality of ſpiritual Objects, and their Revelation, (the beſt being (alas!) miſerably ſhort and deficient herein): but alſo internal, (the profeſſion of theſe being matter of practiſe) Moderation cannot poſſibly here have any place, much leſs that which reſpects others.

2. *Nor in matters of moral practice*, ſuch as the moral Law requires, and grace and vertue ſhould perform. For in theſe can be no exceſs, either in degree or duration. We cannot love God too much, nor with Grace our Neighbour, nor too conſtantly. Conſider Father, Mother, Wife, Children, *as Moral Objects*, ſo we exceed not, as *natural goods*; and ſo in the exerciſe of natural affection, we frequently (as is ſaid before) do exceed, which is diſcernable eſpecially by the end; with Grace we love them for God; with the moral vertue of love, for the relation they ſtand in to us; with the affection of love, when we ſinfully over-love them for our loves: for though the natural affection co-operates with the former, yet it ſolely exceeds. But it being difficult for us to diſcern theſe *formalities* in Objects, and the operations of Principles about them, it is our only way to have recourſe to God's Laws, (which though founded upon the nature of things, yet ſhew us plainly our duty, where we cannot diſcern them) which, in all things wherein we may exceed, (as in the Externals of the firſt Table, and the duties of the ſecond) not only preſcribe us what, and alſo particularly how to act by Poſitive Precepts; but, leſt we ſhould miſcarry, by Negative alſo, which reſpect the end, manner, meaſure, *&c.* of ſuch duties, reſtraining and bounding us that we exceed not. Both which are Moral, and comprehended in this particular, it being equally moral not to over-love, as to love thy Neighbour; the former being forbidden, as well by the Negative, as the latter enjoyned by poſitive Precepts.

In Negatives, which forbid the action *abſolutely*, (as Blaſphemy, Adultery, *&c.*) no need of any ſuch Precepts to regulate us; for the actions being not to be done, no need of direction for their manner, and conſequently no place for Moderation; ſuch being to be ſubdued, and ſuppreſt, not ordered or regulated, as I have formerly ſpoken, and in things only *endefinitely* forbidden, (as Swearing, Travelling on the Lord's day, *&c.*) when we are to practice them, we have the Rules for Poſitive Actions, Affirmitive, and Negative, to direct us ſufficiently.

3. *Nor eſpecially in the weightier matters of the Law or Religion.* I muſt ſpeak

ſpeak a little to this; becauſe that may be commanded *abſolutely* in it ſelf, which *comparatively*, when it comes in competition with other duties of greater moment, becomes only conditional. For affirmative Precepts are ſo many, it is impoſſible they ſhould bind *ad ſemper*; ſo that when two or more duties come together, man, in regard of his finite capacity, being not able to perform them at once, muſt duly conſider the weighteſt, and that do; it being requiſite in terms of inconſiſtency, that the leſſer always give place to the greater, and ceaſe *pro hic & nunc*, or for that preſent to oblige us. Thus *Davids* eating the Shew-bread, and the Diſciples plucking the Ears of Corn on the Sabbath day, when hungry, is defended by our Saviour, *Mat.* 12. Yea, even frequently the externals of the firſt Table, give way to the weighty exigent duties of the Second, (as the ſanctification of the Sabbath, to the defending the City in the *Maccabees* caſe) according to that, *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice, Hoſ.* 6. 6. Not only *rather than* ſacrifice, but in ſuch caſes *not* ſacrifice. God diſpenſing with the leſſer, ſo that its omiſſion becomes no ſin; as is clear, in our Saviours practice, in his healing the man with the withered hand, *&c.* as well as in his defence of his Diſciples, *Luke.* 6. For that may be our duty, and neceſſary at one time, which at another (when a weightier comes that ſhould take place) ceaſeth to be ſo, by vertue of the reaſon and conſtitution of the Laws themſelves, that the Superiour Law take place.

Therefore under the notion of moderation, to omit moral, and eſpecially the great and neceſſary duties required, and practiſe only the leſs, is Phariſaical Hypocriſie, not Chriſtianity. If to do the great duties of Religion God requires of us, be accounted immoderateneſs, let us ſay with *David*, *If this be to be vile, we will be more vile ſtill.* God's Laws admit of no ἐπιεικεια, or diſpenſation from us, but what he hath admitted himſelf, we muſt neither add or detract, *Deut.* 4. 2. Thou canſt neither mitigate their execution, nor any other beſides himſelf, on thee for thy tranſgreſſing them. If the wiſe *Romans* were ſo careful to preſerve their Laws from others, than the ſupream diſpenſing with them, leſt they ſhould prove a *Lesbian* rule; much more the Great and Wiſe God hath reaſon to keep up the authority of his Laws, and expect our punctual obſervance of them. Moderation in Religion, and religious Duties, is the deviliſh Precept of *Machiavel*, not the Doctrine of the Goſpel, or St. *Paul*. To engage or wade no further in Religion, than temporal intereſts will permit us to come ſafely again to ſhore, was the reſolution and ſpeech of a greater Courtier of *France* than of Heaven: and of ſuch as reſolve more to ſave their Skins than their Souls. How doth Chriſt every where arm thoſe that will be his Diſciples, againſt their deſiſting from their neceſſary duty? for the offence of the World is ſo far from concealing this, that it is the firſt thing he tells them of, invites them upon no other terms than the Croſs; tells them, they muſt truſt him in this World, for compenſating them in the future, *&c.* *Mat.* 16. from 24. to *ult.* And how eminent was he in the practice of this? How did the zeal of God's Houſe eat him up, and he perſiſt in doing the work he was ſent

Digeſt. de legib. & ſenatus. conſ.

ſent about, notwithſtanding all the offence the Jews took? And yet in his own private concerns, how meek, gentle, patient, which none can be ignorant of that read the Goſpel, and which he commands us to learn of him, *Matt.* 11. 18. Great then is the miſtake of thoſe that think Zeal and Moderation (which were thus eminently concerned in Chriſt) ſhould be inconſiſtent. No lovelier match than of this bleſſed couple in our Souls; nor of more univerſal uſe to us throughout the courſe of our lives, if rightly ordered, the one for God, the other for the World; that giving life and intenſneſs in our duties towards him, this reſtraining us in our perſonal Concernments; that edging and quickning us in deſires, motions, and endeavours for Heaven, and this ſtopping us, and retarding the Wheels, when we drive too furiouſly after our own Intereſts: that according to knowledg, ſupplying us with reſolution for, and fervor in the great Duties of Religion; this according to charity, duly qualifying them in the leſs; that our love to God, and one another, may walk hand in hand Heaven-ward, and neither leave the other behind.

Poſitively. It muſt then be in matters of Opinion, and Chriſtian-Liberty, and Indifferency, as they all refer to practice. And here let none expect I ſhould determine what things are only matters of Opinion, Liberty, and Indifferency (which ſo much trouble the World) what not; For every one herein muſt, according to the Scriptures, be in ſome reſpect Judg for himſelf and his own practice, 1 *Cor.* 10. 29. *Rom.* 14. 4, 12. Upon which I ſhall proceed, and ſhew our moderation in *Principles, Paſſions, Speeches,* and *Practices.*

1. *We muſt moderate our Principles or Judgments concerning theſe, by forming them according to the nature of Truths and Duties.* This is neceſſary, not only in regard of our ſelves, (for as the judgment, ſuch is the practice) but others alſo, for the moderating our prejudices towards them. We muſt therefore carefully diſtinguiſh between matters of Faith, and neceſſary Duty; and matters of Opinion, and conditional Practice. For though every ray of truth be excellent in it ſelf, and abſolutely there be no *minimum in Religione*, as the Heathen ſaid; yet comparatively there is great difference in Truths, ſome differing from others, as one Star from another in glory. Nor have all the like clearneſs of revelation, nor ſhine forth with that luſtre as others, nor all alike conſequence. Some are βαρύτερα νόμε, great in themſelves, clear to us, and weighty in their conſequence, *Matth.* 23. 23. Theſe we muſt hold faſt, practiſe carefully, contend for earneſtly, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. *Jude* 3. Others are ſuch, as *ſalva Religione*, we may, and do differ in, both in judgment and practice, without the endangering our happineſs, *For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt,* Rom. 14. 17, *i. e.* in the opinion or practcie of thoſe, the falſe Apoſtles would have obtruded as neceſſary. In theſe things, our Principles ſhould give us leave to meet one another in our Practice; keeping the

Unity

Unity of the Spirit in the former, and the Bond of Peace by the latter, as the Apoſtle enjoyns, *Epheſ.* 4. 3.

2. *We muſt moderate our paſſions in theſe, our heat and fervor for them, our anger againſt thoſe that differ from us in them.* In theſe things, wherein the way to Heaven is broad enough, there may be difference without diviſion; and let any take heed how they ſtraiten it, taking upon them to be wiſer than Chriſt, who well knowing humane frailty, ſo chalked it out to us, telling us, *He that doth the Will of his Father* (not, that is, for or againſt theſe things) *is his Brother, Siſter, and Mother*; and conſequently ſhould be Brethren and Siſters amongſt themſelves. It is ſtrange to conſider, how upon principles and prejudice once ſuckt in, Paſſion blinds men in their own opinions and practices, and what woful diviſions hath in all Ages ariſen thence? That the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches, wherein were ſo many Grave, Holy, Learned, and Wiſe Men, ſhould ſo fall out as to make a ſeparation; every one would be ready to think and ſay, Surely it was ſome great matter that occaſioned it; would you know? nothing but about the time of the Obſervation of *Eaſter*. Though *Irenæus* and others were mighty Advocates for Peace, yet nothing would ſerve *Victor* Biſhop of *Rome*, but exact Uniformity in theſe indifferences; and thence aroſe about two hundred years after Chriſt, that great breach of Unity betwixt thoſe two great and famous Churches. How doth all the zeal and fervor we ſhould beſtow upon the great things of Religion run out at this time amongſt us, about theſe things! May not I ſay, *Quorſum hæc perditio?* Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Why do we ſtand thus buſily, hewing good Timber into Chips; and leaving out the Figures, ſpend our time in the bare Cyphers? How many, on both ſides, at this day, make it their Religion to be for, or againſt thoſe things that they account indifferent in themſelves? So true is the *Moraliſts* obſervation, that the Devil always labors, *That mankind may either holy neglect a Deity, or be wholly taken up in the Externals of Worſhip.* Quite contrary to Scripture, that teacheth us to mind every thing, as of conſequence in its place; to do the great and weighty things, and not to leave the other undone. *My beloved, the wrath of man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God:* When *Elijah*, that good Prophet was diſcontented, 1 *King* 19, and paſſionately requeſts he may die, *verſ.* 4, and profeſſeth his zeal for the great things of Religion, *verſe* 10, God paſſeth by him, but in the great and ſtrong Wind, or in the Earth-quake, or in the Fire, the Lord was not, but *in the ſtill ſmall voice*, *verſe* 11, 12, ſhewing him, and us thereby, that he is not in our Paſſions; and if not for the great, how much leſs for theſe things of Religion; wherein the Apoſtles rule for peace and edification (*Rom.* 14. 19), ſhould be obſerved. God never ſuſpended his Churches peace upon theſe: for if I ſhould not love others, till I knew they were of all my opinions, and my practice in theſe, I might perhaps never love any.

2. *We*

2. *We muſt moderate our ſpeeches, in our diſcourſes of, debates and conteſts for or againſt theſe.* Some ſpeeches we are too apt to, we muſt wholly forbear, others we muſt moderate. 1. We muſt beware of judging and cenſuring others for theſe. We may in apparent tranſgreſſions of Gods Law, cenſure upon occaſion the offenders, though not raſhly, or for Hypocrites, Reprobates, or the like; but for theſe we muſt not at all, *Rom.* 14. 4, *&c.* For in theſe, through anothers knowledg, that may not be a ſin in him, which would to thee; and thou judgeſt ſinful therefore in others for want of charity. How much malice, and how little candor do we uſe in this! How do we almoſt make it the characteriſtical note of Chriſtianity, to be of ſuch or ſuch a way which none account eſſential to Religion! We are apt (as thoſe in *Africa*, in *Tertullians* time) to account it enough, that we or others are of ſuch a Party; and to impale the Church, and impropriate Chriſt and Salvation every one of us to our own ſide. And this many times the moſt, by the Vulgar: ſo true is that of *Seneca*, *Qui pauca reſpiunt, facile pronunciant*; Thoſe that diſcern the leaſt, being apt to judg moſt. 2. We muſt take heed of deſpiſing and contemning others for theſe, *Rom.* 14. 3. As the former of not judging, ſo this of not deſpiſing, is a neceſſary duty internally as to our ſelves, and in our carriage and ſpeeches eſpecially, as they reſpect our external duty towards others; our ſinning in both ariſing from uncharitableneſs, in that to others liberty, in this to that we judg their weakneſs. Our hearts and tongues are too apt to follow our judgments, and break out in theſe exorbitancies; but, *my Brethren*, theſe things ought not ſo to be; judg not, cenſure not according to outward appearance, or inward prejudice, but righteous and charitable judgment, rather that we mutually bear with one another in theſe. And when we have occaſion to diſcourſe or debate concerning what things are ſuch, or their practice; not meaſuring all mens judgment by the model of our own apprehenſions; or like Dictators, thinking our ſelves infallible, obtrude thoſe things for neceſſary, which it may be others of as piercing ſight, account but indifferent; or thoſe things for indifferent, which they reckon amongſt the number of unlawfuls, but modeſtly declaring our judgments herein. For as I told you in the entrance, I take not upon me to determine what are ſuch, nor the Magiſtrates duty (concerning which, I think he ſaid well and wiſely, *That it were good, they require as little as they can*, (what's neceſſary for the ſafeguard of Religion, as contained in the Scriptures) *and Subjects practiſe as much as they can*) but only for the direction of every one how to order their converſation in the diverſity of Judgments that are amongſt us.

4. *We muſt moderate our practiſing of theſe, according to the circumſtances we are in, and as they are convenient and expedient for us.* Sometimes the practice of theſe muſt be wholly waved; for the Laws concerning them being *conditional*, as to their doing or not doing, (though not as to the manner thereof) and not *abſolute*, as of neceſſary duties, their practice becomes ſuſpended on ſuch conditions; which (be-

ſides that I formerly mentioned, *viz.* when they come in competition with greater matters) are eſpecially three. In regard of our ſelves, diſſatisfaction of *Conſcience*; In regard of others, *known ſcandal*, and *diſturbance of publick ſetled peace*. When any of theſe caſes occur, wherein the condition on which the command is ſuſpended, is wanting, the command there (as all other conditionals) becomes *negative*. For we are obliged abſolutely in moral duties to do them, and for the manner rightly, they being no ways ſuſpended as to practiſe; but in theſe only abſolutely for the manner, that if we do them, we do them rightly; and conditionally, if we be ſatisfied in our judgments, and offend not others thereby, or diſturb the publick peace: the firſt being knowledg in our ſelves, the other two charity to others, if we do them. And therefore where there is no place left for charity to others, as in caſe of equal ſcandal on both hands, thy doing or forbearing, there thou art at liberty. In which caſe, in ſmaller matters, that which is leaſt obſervable is beſt; in greater matters, according to thy concernments and charity to thy ſelf, and for general good (if the Publick be intereſted in thee). For when we cannot know on which ſide, our doing, or not doing, moſt evil to others lies, charity to our ſelves preponderates ſuppoſals of the iſſue.

But time permits me not to launch out into Diſcourſes of theſe caſes, my Subject alſo confining me to the exerciſe of Moderation, which when the action is to be wholly omitted, is not required, its Office being only (as I have often ſaid) in the regulating of actions. As we muſt therefore uſe modeſty in our ſpeeches for or againſt theſe, ſo alſo in our practiſing them according to conveniency and expediency; not too violently running our ſelves out of breath, or a-tilt at others, in our practiſing them, but with that equalneſs of ſpirit and candor towards others as becomes us, *Rom.* 14. 19, and 23. 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.

Thus I have done with the *Caſe*, wherein I have been too large (I confeſs) in the whole, though perhaps too ſhort in ſeveral particulars, and I hope not very tedious in any. A little more time for that which remains, will give a releaſe to my pains and your patience.

The Perſons. For the third General, the Perſons. [1. *Who* muſt exerciſe this Moderation? and that's in a word, *all*. [2. *To whom?* and that's alſo *all* with whom we have to do, of all ranks, degrees and qualities, Superiors and Inferiors, as well as Equals, of all tempers and carriages; not only to the gentle, but alſo to the froward; not only to Friends, and thoſe equal and fair to us; for then what ſingular thing do we? but to thoſe that are, or we repute our Enemies, that deſpitefully hate us, and injuriouſly perſecute us, as our Saviour teacheth, *Mat.* 5. 44. [3. *Before whom?* and that's expreſt in the Text, *all men*: our converſation in all the good and the evil things of this life, and towards all, muſt to all that ſee, and obſerve, or hear thereof, be known to be moderate.

Reaſons. The fourth General, or the equity of this Command, which I ſhall ſhew

ſhew for that towards perſons (waving that towards things, both in this, and application, (as I told you) being by many ſufficiently handled) in three particulars.

1. *This is no other than what God himſelf exerciſes towards us:* In all his dealings with mankind, from the fall, to the conſummation and end of the World. This doth eminently, and always will appear, ſo that good reaſon we ſhould do it, *That we may be the Children of our Heavenly Father,* (Matt. 5. 45.) who ſpareth us continually, when we offend and ſin againſt him. If God was not more moderate than man, the World would quickly crack about our ears; for if man had power to his will, it would ſcarcely be habitable; but he that hath power, if he ſhould but exerciſe it even juſtly, and not uſe moderation, it would no longer be inhabited. *Thou wicked Servant, I forgave thee all, ſhouldeſt not thou have had compaſſion on thy fellow ſervant?* Matt. 18. 32, 33.

2. *Chriſt did uſe Moderation eminently towards us, and hath left us his example to follow, in our exerciſing it towards one another.* Though he was *equal with God, yet made himſelf of no reputatien, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even to the death of the Croſs,* Phil. 2. 7. Whoſe example how pathetically doth the Apoſtle urge, *Verſe* 1, 2, *That nothing be done through ſtrife or vain-glory, but in lowlineſs of mind, eſteeming others better than our ſelves; not looking every man on his own things, but the things of others,* Verſe 3, 4, likewiſe *Matt.* 11. 25, and many other places well known.

3. *Becauſe we have all need of this from one another.* We are all men ſubject to like paſſions; nay, uſually thoſe that need it moſt from others, uſe it leaſt; ſuch as are paſſionate and boiſterous, and though good men, yet as a wiſe man ſaid of one of ſuch a rugged temper, *Though he had Grace enough for ſeven others, yet had little enough for himſelf.* But yet if there be any ſo equal tempered by Nature, ſo poliſhed by Education, ſo ruled by Grace in all things, and towards all, that he hath no need of moderation from others, let him take the firſt ſtone, and violently throw at his Neighbour. Read, I pray, *Matt.* 18, from *Verſe* 21, to the end, which is the great Scripture for our Moderation to one another, and is moſt ample therein; where you will ſee both the equity and neceſſity thereof to Salvation.

For the laſt particular, which is the Uſe and Application of this Moderation towards one another.

1 *Uſe of Information.* That it is not enough that we have Moderation, (which all pretend to, though few practiſe) but we muſt ſhew it; nay, not only ſhew it ſparingly, or at ſome times, and to ſome, but uſually, frequently, conſtantly, and to all men. *Uſe.*

Uſe 2. Therefore of *Exhortation.* Wherein let me plead with you a little, for Moderation towards one another; this ſo much a wanting, and yet ſo neceſſary Duty, beſides the equitableneſs thereof in the *Reaſons,* conſider briefly the neceſſity, utility, and jucundity thereof.

1. *How necessary?* Are there not συνοντῶς, or difficuties? Have all the like apdrehensions? Is not the balance of Reason very deceitful? Are any of us infallible? Nay, doth not the pretence thereto declare the contrary.

2. *How profitable is this to us all?* Moderation doth not a little conduce to the health of our bodies, as the great *Hippocrates* and Experience tells us; nothing more destroying us, than not only immoderateness in things, but our passions against others; and not less to the peace and tranquility of our minds, for the enjoyment of our selves; and most to the serving and enjoying of God. If good *Jonah* be in a passion, he is not only weary of his life, but his praying is nothing but quarrelling with God, *Jonah* 4. Nay, it hath an especial promise both from God and Christ; *The meek shall inherit the earth*, Psal. 36. 11, whom our Saviour therefore pronounceth *blessed*, *Matth.* 5. 5. Whosoever therefore may curse them, or count them fools for the same, he having blessed them, blessed they shall be.

3. *How sweet and pleasant a thing is Moderation, both to our selves and others?* It being the foundation of that sweet Fellowship and Communion of Saints, which is one great Article of our Creed.

Val. Max. l. 9. c. 5.

Experience tells every one how sweet the Fruit of Moderation is, so that Felicity and it (as the Heathen said) constantly dwell together, in Families, in Nations, all the World over. Without it, this World would be a Desert, barren of all comfort, and nothing but a vast howling Wilderness for Bears and Wolves, not civil Men or Christians to dwell in. Let therefore the *necessity* of Moderation perswade thee, let its *profit* and *pleasure* draw and allure thee to the practice thereof.

Lastly, To these Motives, let me add that of the Text, *The Lord is at hand.* For so I look upon this, and all other Arguments subjoyned to Exhortations and Commands; for though they be materially Reasons to convince, yet are formally Motives to perswade and quicken us to the Duties enjoyned. Flesh and blood may say, others are insolent, and the more we are ready to bear, the more they are apt to injure us; as the Heathens to the Christians of old cried, *Blessed are the poor*, and so plundered them: Therefore *Ululandum inter lupos*, we must retaliate like for like. Oh no, saith the Apostle, ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς, the Lord is *nigh* to observe them, and how they carry in his Family; whose wisdom governs their petulancy, and whose power and goodness can overcome all their malice and unkindness; is nigh to observe thee, and to help thee in his due time, if injured; and is nigh also to judg both, to punish those that miscarry, *Matthew* 18. 34, 35, and reward those that herein are his Children. The not believing this, *that the Lord is at hand*, in his Providence, and with his Judgment, is the great reason of the want of Moderation in the World. Let us therefore all live under a continual sense of this, and all pray for, and practise *Moderation*. *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another,*

ther, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwiſe bleſſing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye ſhould inherit a bleſſing, (1 Pet. 3. 8, 9,) *and that the Lord is at hand, ready to beſtow it upon all thoſe that make their moderation known unto all men.*

How

How may we have ſuitable Conceptions of God in duty?

Gen. XVIII. 27.

And Abraham anſwered and ſaid, Behold, now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes.

THis Text preſents to us *Abraham*'s ſtanding before the Lord, pleading for the preſervation of the Righteous, in the deſtruction of *Sodom*, and for the preſervation of *Sodom* (if poſſible) from deſtruction, for the Righteous ſake.

That which we have in it more eſpecially to take notice of in reference to this preſent Exerciſe, is with what apprehenſions or conceptions of God, *Abraham* did ſpeak to God, did deport himſelf towards God, did manage this great undertaking with God. Concerning which, four things preſent themſelves for our Obſervation.

1. That thoſe Apprehenſions or Conceptions *Abraham* had of God, did highly exalt and magnifie the greatneſs and excellency of God in his heart; —*Behold, now I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord*; One who hath Excellency, and Soveraignty, and Majeſty, and Dominion, and Power, and Glory.

2. That they were ſuch Conceptions of God, as did humble, vilifie, and abaſe *Abraham* in himſelf, in compariſon of God;—*I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, which am but Duſt and Aſhes*; a ſinful, weak, worthleſs, frail piece of vanity and mortality.

3. That they were ſuch Conceptions of God, as did repreſent him Gracious, Propitious, Benevolous to the Creature, notwithſtanding the greatneſs and excellency of God, and the meanneſs and unworthineſs of the Creature: Thus much ſeems to be comprehended in the Note of Admiration, *Behold*! — O what admirable condeſcention is this in the Great God! O what wonderful Mercy and Grace is this, that ſuch a poor vile

vile Creature ſhould have liberty to ſpeak to him, to parley with him!

4 That they were ſuch apprehenſions of God, as did beget in *Abraham* a Faith of Acceptation with God in the performance of that duty, without which it had been dangerous preſumption in him, *who was but duſt and aſhes, to take upon him to ſpeak unto the Lord.*

This Example of *Abraham* I ſhall endeavour to draw forth for our Practice and Imitation; He who is made to us a Pattern of Faith, may be to us a Pattern of true Worſhip; and ſuch apprehenſions or conceptions *Abraham* had of God in ſpeaking to him, ſuch conceptions of God we are to have in our Prayers and performances to him.

For which end I ſhall lay down this general Propoſition.

That ſuch as ſpeak to God, or ſpeak of God; ſuch as draw near to God, or have to do with God in any part of Divine Worſhip, muſt manage all their performances, with apprehenſions and due conceptions of God. Doct.

The truth of this General Propoſition, I ſhall endeavour to manifeſt and make clear, by laying down four particular Propoſitions, which muſt give evidence to it.

The firſt Propoſition is this, That we cannot have any true, right apprehenſions, or conceptions of God, except we have a true knowledg of him; Such as have not known God, have ſlighted him; *Who is the Lord*, ſaith *Pharaoh, that I ſhould obey him? I know not the Lord*, Exod. 5. 2. Such as know not God, nor deſire to know him, are ſo far from drawing near to God, that they drive him as far from them as they can; they ſay unto the Almighty, *Depart from us, who deſire not the knowledg of his ways*, Job 21. 14.

What counſel *Eliphaz* gave *Job*, (whom he ſuppoſed to be a greater ſtranger to God than indeed he was) may be an uſeful inſtruction to us, *Job* 22. 21, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God.*—To know God, and to be known of God, is our higheſt priviledg; *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace.* The reaſon why any are real enemies to God, is, becauſe they know not God; and the reaſon why many think God is an enemy to them, is, becauſe they are not acquainted with God ſo intimately as they ſhould; *Acquaint thy ſelf with God* (ſaith he)—and thereby good ſhall come unto thee: But what good? And how ſhall this good come? It is partly expreſt, *v.* 22, 23, 24, 25, but more fully, *v.* 26, 27, *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face to God; Thou ſhalt make thy prayer unto him, and he ſhall hear thee, and thou ſhalt pay thy vows*; So that except we know God aright, and have ſome acquaintance with him, we cannot delight our ſelves in God, we cannot make our prayer to him, nor lift up our face unto him.

The ſecond Propoſition is, That we cannot know any thing ſavingly of God, further than he is pleaſed to manifeſt and make known himſelf to us; No man can make known God, but God himſelf: *Moſes*, who had ſeen as much of God's glory as any man, when he deſired a further manifeſtation of God's glory, in a higher meaſure or degree than formerly he had ſeen, he goes to God himſelf for it, *Exod* 33. 18, *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory.*

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The great Promiſe Chriſt maketh to them that love him and keep his Commandments, is the manifeſtation of himſelf to them by himſelf, *Joh.* 14. 21.—I will manifeſt my ſelf to them, for none elſe can: A Diſciple puts a Queſtion to him about it, *ver.* 22, *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf to us, and not to the World?* We have a clear anſwer to this, *Luk.* 10. 21. This very Doctrine which is ſo much matter of indignation to the wiſe and prudent of the World, is matter of rejoycing and exultation to the Spirit of Chriſt; and he ſaid, *I thank thee, O Father, that thou haſt hid—and thou haſt revealed—For ſo it ſeemed good in thy ſight:* Hence is that of our Saviour, *Joh.* 17. 25, *O righteous Father, the World hath not known thee, but theſe have known* ——

The Third Propoſition is, That the cleareſt manifeſtations of God to us, and ſuch as can beget in us right apprehenſions and due conceptions of him, are made out to us, In and By Jeſus Chriſt, *Joh.* 1. 18, *No man hath ſeen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the boſom of the Father, he hath declared him*; Therefore no man ever did, or can apprehend any thing of God truly, that is, upon a ſaving account, but in and by Jeſus Chriſt.

The Divine Eſſence or Godhead, *No man hath ſeen, nor can ſee in it ſelf*, 1 Tim, 6. 16.

Something of this Eternal Godhead, is manifeſted in the Works of Creation, *Rom.* 1. 20, *The inviſible things of God*, viz. *his Eternal Power and Godhead*, are clearly ſeen in the things that are made; But yet this knowledg of God in the Creature, could not bear down the vain imaginations, or Idolatrous conception of God in mens hearts, as appears *ver.* 21, 23.

Much of the Eternal Godhead, is manifeſted in the Works of Providence; *God doth great things paſt finding out, and wondrous without number; Yet lo, he goeth by us, and we ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but we perceive him not*, Job 9. 10, 11. God is inviſible in himſelf, and incomprehenſible in his works; *Job* made it his work to trace God in his works, *Job* 23. 8, 9. Sometimes God was working forward, or before him; ſometimes backward, or behind him; ſometimes on his right hand, ſometimes at his left hand. *Job* follows him up and down, if he might apprehend him, and the reaſon and deſign of God in all his works, but he could not perceive him, God hid himſelf from him.

Much more of the Eternal Godhead was manifeſted in his moſt Righteous and Holy Law; but the manifeſtations of God here affrighted them that ſaw it; the People cry out, *Let not the Lord ſpeak any more to us, leſt we die*; and *Moſes* himſelf ſaid, *I exceedingly fear*; ſo terrible was the ſight of God there, *Heb.* 12. 21.

Hence it will follow, that the cleareſt, ſweeteſt, moſt comfortable manifeſtations of God to us, and ſuch as can beget in us right apprehenſions and conceptions of God, are made out to us only in Jeſus Chriſt, who is the Image of the Inviſible God, *Coloſ.* 1. 15. In whom God hath made ſuch diſcoveries of himſelf, as can no where be ſeen but in Chriſt; He is the expreſs Image or Character of his Fathers Perſon, *Heb.* 1. 3.

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The exact reſemblance of all his Fathers excellencies in their utmoſt perfections; therefore when *Philip* deſired him to ſhew them of the Father, to give them a ſight to ſatisfaction, *Joh.* 14. 9, 10, *He that hath ſeen me*, (ſaith Chriſt to him) *hath ſeen the Father*; *Believe it*, Philip, *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.*

In the Works of Creation, God is a God above us; In his Works of Providence, a God without us; In the Law, a God againſt us; In himſelf, a God inviſible to us; Only in Chriſt he is *Emmanuel*, God manifeſted in our fleſh, God in us, God with us, God for us.

Hence follows the fourth Propoſition, That the manifeſtations of God to us in Chriſt, are thoſe which alone can beget thoſe due apprehenſions, and right Conceptions of God, with which we muſt draw near to him, and perform all our worſhip to him.

As *Abraham* is held forth to us a Pattern of Faith; ſo he may be to us a Pattern of Worſhip, in as much as all true Worſhip to God is performed by Faith, by Faith in Chriſt: Such apprehenſions therefore *Abraham* had of God in his Worſhip, ſuch apprehenſions of God we are to have in our Worſhip; and as *Abraham* had thoſe conceptions of God by Faith in Chriſt, ſo can we have the like conceptions of God by Faith in Chriſt only.

1. Thoſe apprehenſions *Abraham* had of God did beget (as we have ſhewn) high thoughts of God: with ſuch apprehenſions of God we muſt perform all our worſhip; ſee what high thoughts of God his people have always had in worſhipping him, *Neh.* 9. 5, 6. 1 *Tim.* 1. 17. 1 *Tim.* 6. 16.

Low thoughts of God will ever perform but low, baſe, contemptible Service and Worſhip; they brought God the blind, the lame, the ſick for Sacrifice, *Mal.* 1. *Go*, ſaith God, *preſent them to your Governour*, and ſee if he do not ſcorn your preſent, as undervalued by it? *Ver.* 8. *And ſhall I accept this at your hands*, which a petty Lord will reject with indignation, *Verſ.* 13, *For I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, Verſ.* 14.

Now ſuch high thoughts and conceptions of God with which all our Worſhip muſt be performed to him, can ſpring only from the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt, who is the higheſt Revelation of the Glory of God, *Iſa.* 40. 5. The brightneſs, the effulgency of his Glory, *Heb.* 1. 3. When God had yielded to give *Moſes* a ſight of his Glory, he put him into the Clift of the Rock (which was a *reſemblance of Chriſt, as a Learned Divine hath obſerved) and ſo made his Glory to paſs before him, *Exod.* 33. 22. Certainly, *Moſes* had here a ſight of Gods Glory, beyond all that ever he had ſeen before. Compare with this that Text, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6, *God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledg of his Glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt:* All the other manifeſtations of Gods Glory were but dark and dim, in compariſon of thoſe which appear in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore we can attain no where

* Dr. *Rainolds* Pſal. 110. p. 166.

ſuch high, ſo great, ſo glorious Conceptions of God as in Jeſus Chriſt.

2. *Abraham* had ſuch Conceptions of God as humbled, emptied, and abaſed him in himſelf, in compariſon of God; and with ſuch apprehenſions of God muſt we perform all our Worſhip to him, *Pſalm* 95. 6. We are exhorted to come and worſhip, and bow down, and kneel.——In all worſhip we are to teſtifie, as our abſolute ſubjection to God, ſo our humbleſt ſubmiſſion to him; Obſerve what ſelf-abaſing thoughts the apprehenſions of Gods goodneſs wrought in *David*, when he went to worſhip before the Lord, 2 *Sam.* 7. 18, 19, 20.

Now ſuch Conceptions of God, which above all others humble, and leſſen, and abaſe the Creature before God, they ſpring principally from the manifeſtation of God in Chriſt.

See *Salkeld de Ang.* c. 34, & 35. Aquin. part 1. queſt. 62. Art. 1.

It is the general opinion of the Schoolmen, that the Angels in the firſt inſtant of their Creation did not enjoy that ſight of God we call *Beatifical viſion*; and that the Angels that fell, never had ſight of it at all; for if they had, they could not have fallen. But what they talk of the good Angels meriting that *Beatifical viſion* of God in the ſecond or third inſtant of their Creation, is Popiſh foppery; Divines unanimouſly attribute their ſtation and ſtability in holineſs, to Jeſus Chriſt: We may upon good grounds alſo attribute to Jeſus Chriſt their firſt admiſſion into the preſence, ſight, enjoyment of God, their ſtate of ſuper-natural bleſſedneſs. Pardon this digreſſion; it is to make the way clear for the demonſtration in hand, *viz.* That the Angels before they had a ſight of God, or of themſelves, in Chriſt, many of them waxed proud and fell; the ſame pride that ruined ſome, might have ruined all; but after they had a ſight of God in Chriſt, how humble were they? that Viſion ſpoken of, *Iſa.* 6. 1, 2, was manifeſtly an appearance of the Glory of God in Jeſus Chriſt, *I ſaw the Lord upon his Throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the Temple*; what the carriage of the Seraphims was towards God in this his appearance is expreſt, *Each one had ſix wings, with twain they did fly*; noting their ready execution of Gods Commands: *with twain they did cover their faces*, noting their natural impotency in themſelves to behold the ſurpaſſing brightneſs of Divine Glory; *with twain they covered their feet*, as humbled in the ſenſe and ſhame of their own Creature-imperfection in compariſon of the infinite purity and holineſs of God.

Thus, when *Moſes* had had a ſight of the Glory of God in Chriſt, *He made haſte, he bowed his head toward the earth and worſhipped.* Exod. 34. 8. Quickly is the ſoul humbled at the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt. In Chriſt we have ſeen God humbling, emptying, leſſening, diſhonouring himſelf for us, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7. Who can be proud that hath had a true ſight of God humbled for him?

By the manifeſtations of God in Chriſt are begotten the deepeſt ſoulhumiliations for ſin, *Zach.* 12. 10, *They ſhall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him——and they ſhall be in bitterneſs for*

for him——This great ſorrow was not for the piercing of the Humanity of Chriſt barely conſidered; but for piercing God in Chriſt, though the Godhead was not in the leaſt paſſive; therefore that blood which was ſhed, is called, *The blood of God*, Acts 20. 28. and that perſon who was pierced, called, *The Lord of Glory*, 1 Cor. 2. 8. Sins againſt the manifeſtations of the Love, Mercy, Grace, Compaſſions, Goodneſs, and Glory of God in Chriſt, beget the deepeſt humiliation of ſoul in all our Confeſſions.

3. *Abraham* had ſuch Conceptions of God, as did repreſent him gracious, propitious, benevolous to the Creature, a bountiful rewarder of him that ſerveth him, notwithſtanding the greatneſs of God, or the unworthineſs of the Creature.

Such apprehenſions we muſt have of God in all our approaches to him, in all our performances of duty and worſhip.

When *Cain* could not apprehend ſo much favour and grace of God as could pardon his ſin, and remove his puniſhment, he then went out from the preſence of the Lord, *Gen.* 4. 13, 16. That is (as Interpreters of good note render it) he left the Church of God in his Fathers Family, the Worſhip of God, the Ordinances of God, the ſervice of God, the profeſſion of God and all: Such as cannot have apprehenſions of God as gracious, propitious, will not come into the preſence of God.

Nor ſuch as cannot apprehend him a bountiful rewarder of them that come to him: They bid God depart from them, who queſtion whether God can do any thing for them, or whether there be any profit in his ſervice, *Job* 21. 14, 15. and *Job* 22. 17. when thoſe mercenary hypocrites had loſt their worldly profits and preferments which they had gained by the profeſſion of Religion, when the tide was turned, and prophaneneſs only countenanced, they caſt of all, and ſaid, *It is in vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances?* Mal. 3. 14, 15.

But he that cometh to God, muſt have ſuch apprehenſions of him as render him Gracious as well as Glorious, Merciful as well as Righteous; for we come to God ſitting on his Throne of Grace, *Heb.* 4. *ult.* and we have to deal with mercy for ſupply to all our needs.

And he that cometh to God muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, Heb. 11. 6. Why did *David* prefer the loweſt place or office in the Houſe or Church of God (a Porters place) before the higheſt preferments in the Tents of ungodlineſs, *Pſal.* 84. 10? He gives the reaſon, *Verſ.* 11, *For the Lord is a Sun and ſhield*: A Sun to confer all good, a ſhield to preſerve from all evil; *He will give Grace and Glory*, what can a man deſire more? yet if there be any good thing beſide *Grace and Glory*, he will not withhold it; ſuch a bountiful Maſter is God in his Houſe, and ſuch a one his Servants apprehend him.

Now, we cannot have right apprehenſions and due conceptions of

the Grace, Mercy, Good will of God to us, but from the manifeſtations of God in Jeſus Chriſt; It is God in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf, and beſeeching us to be reconciled to him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19, 20. When God gave *Moſes* a ſight of his Glory in the Clift of the Rock, *I will*, ſaith God, *make all my goodneſs paſs before thee*, and he proclaimed the name of the Lord, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7, *The Lord, the Lord God, Merciful, Gracious, Long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin*; He preſents himſelf in his richeſt robes of State, and all his Attributes arrayed in a Livery of Grace.

Nor can we have right apprehenſions of God as a bountiful rewarder of his Servants, but through the manifeſtations of himſelf to us in Chriſt; for we cannot expect the reward of Debt, but of Grace; God in Chriſt, and upon the account of Chriſt, is the moſt bountiful Rewarder; So Chriſt tells his Diſciples, *Joh.* 12. 26, *If any man ſerve me, let him follow me: and where I am, there ſhall my ſervant be alſo: If any man ſerve me, him ſhall my Father honour*; We ſerve the Father in ſerving the Son; never was ſervice rewarded with ſuch honour; *For* (ſaith Chriſt) *The Father himſelf loveth you, becauſe ye have loved me, and believed that I am ſent of God*, Joh. 16. 27.

4. *Abraham* had ſuch apprehenſions of God as did beget a comfortable perſwaſion of faith for his acceptation with God, in that his drawing near to him.

It is the mind of God that ſuch as come to him ſhould have ſuch apprehenſions of him as one that will accept them, embrace them, when he diſcovers nothing but wrath and diſpleaſure againſt them that ſtand in oppoſition againſt him, *Iſa.* 27. 4, 5, *Fury is not in me: Let a man take hold of my ſtrength that he may make peace with me, and he ſhall make peace with me*: That holy man knew that all his happineſs conſiſted in the enjoyment of God, therefore he ſaid, *It is good for me to draw near to God*; but was he ſure God would accept him? *I have put my truſt* (ſaith he) *in the Lord God*, Pſal. 73. 27, 28.

Now ſuch apprehenſions of God as beget a faith of acceptation with God in our approaches to him, can ſpring only from the manifeſtations of God to us in Chriſt; that is ſuppoſed (by judicious Interpreters) to be ſpoken of Jeſus Chriſt, *Jer.* 30. 21, who is ſaid to engage his heart to approach unto the Lord, and God ſaith, *I will cauſe him to draw near, and he ſhall approach unto me*; Chriſt hath boldneſs and liberty, full ſecurity of acceptation with God; and hereby he hath procured us liberty, boldneſs, and acceptation with God, *Heb.* 4. 14, 16, *Seeing we have a great High prieſt paſſed into the Heavens——Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace*, Heb. 10. 19, 21, 22, *Having boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt——And having an high Prieſt over the Houſe of God; Let us draw nigh to God with truth of heart, and full aſſurance of Faith*, ver. 2, for the acceptation of our perſons and ſervices, Eph. 3. 12, *In whom we have boldneſs and acceſs with confidence, by the faith of him.*

From

From what hath been laid down we may conclude, That ſuch apprehenſions or Conceptions of God wherewith we are to draw near to God, to perform every duty, and every part of Divine Worſhip muſt flow from the manifeſtations of God in Jeſus Chriſt.

The Uſe I ſhall make of this Point, is to inform Chriſtians how much it concerneth us to acquaint our ſelves more intimately with God, as he hath manifeſted himſelf in Jeſus Chriſt: In whom alone we can have right apprehenſions and due Conceptions of God; without which we cannot perform aright any kind of Worſhip to God. *Uſe.*

1. Without due Apprehenſions and Conceptions of God we cannot perform any part of that Natural Worſhip we owe to God; we cannot love him, fear him, truſt in him, pray unto him, praiſe him, *&c.*

2. Without the right Apprehenſions and due Conceptions of God in Jeſus Chriſt, we cannot perform aright any part of his Inſtituted Worſhip.

1. For all the Ordinances of Gods Inſtituted Worſhip (as the Sacrifices and Sacraments under the Law, ſo the Sacraments and other Ordinances under the Goſpel) ſeem to have immediate relation to, and near dependance on Chriſt, *God manifeſted in the fleſh.* You may obſerve, they conſiſt of two parts, The one Natural; the other Spiritual; The one External, the other Internal: The one as it were, the Body, the other the Soul of it; The one repreſenting the Humanity, the other the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt: So that every Ordinance of Worſhip is (as it were) a repreſentation of Chriſt Incarnate.

2. The Divine Eſſence or Godhead in Jeſus Chriſt ſeems to be the proper object of all Worſhip.

The School-men have concluded (to which I find our learned and pious Divines have given their aſſent) *That the eſſence of the Godhead is the primary and proper Object of Worſhip.* Dr. *Owens* Commun. with the Holy Ghoſt, Chap. 8.

This Divine Eſſence is wholly in Chriſt; *Col.* 2. 9, *In him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily:* In that Body or Humane Nature of Chriſt the fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt, not locally, (as *Locatum in loco*, or *contentum in continente*) but by perſonal Union. And the Divine Eſſence as it is in Chriſt, ſeems to be the proper Object of all Goſpel-Worſhip: It was ſo under the Law in Types and Figures; and ſuch was the Tabernacle and Temple-Worſhip in its ſpiritual Notion.

The Tabernacle or Temple was Gods Habitation, or dwelling place, *Pſal.* 76. 2. There was the only place of Publick-Worſhip, *Pſal.* 29. 2. No Sacrifice was to be offered in any other place; There the Spiritual Worſhippers had by faith a ſight of God, and communion with God, *Pſal.* 63 2. *Pſal.* 68. 24. Towards God in this place they were to make all their Supplications and Prayers, where-ever, or in what Countrey ſoever they were, 1 *Kings* 8. 29, 30. See *Dan.* 6. 10. Now the Tabernacle and Temple were a Type of the Body or Humanity of Chriſt, as himſelf explaineth, *Joh.* 2. 19, in which the Divine glory of the Godhead dwelt,

dwelt, *Joh.* 1. 14, *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt amongſt us,* (or Tabernacled in us, as the Greek word ſignifies) *and we ſaw his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father.* Therefore what the Tabernacle or Temple was to them under the Law, that is Chriſt Jeſus to us under the Goſpel. And as God manifeſted to them in the Temple, was the proper Object of Worſhip to them; ſo God manifeſted to us in Chriſt, is the proper Object of Worſhip to us.

3. The Fleſh or Humanity of Chriſt is the *Medium* or Mean by which we have acceſs to God in all our Worſhip. This is expreſſed, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20, *Having boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt* (where the Divine glory appeared between the Cherubims on the Mercy-ſeat) *by the blood of Jeſus; By a new and living way which he hath conſecrated for us through the Vail, which is to ſay, his Fleſh.* By the Fleſh of Chriſt here, I do not underſtand his Natural Fleſh, barely conſidered as ſuch, but in that Notion as it is to be underſtood: *Joh.* 6. 53, 54, 55, 56, where Chriſt ſpeaketh of eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood unto life; where Chriſt's Fleſh (by a Metonymy of the Cauſe for the Effect) ſignifies the Righteouſneſs, Satisfaction, Reconciliation, Grace, Peace, Glory, Chriſt procured for us by the obedience he performed to God in that Fleſh; By the Fleſh of Chriſt in this ſenſe we have acceſs to God in all our Worſhip.

Yet is not the conſideration of Chriſts Natural Fleſh altogether uſeleſs unto this end; For whereas we are apt to frame Images and Similitudes of God in our minds, the right apprehenſions of God, dwelling in the Humane Nature of Chriſt (who is the true Image of the Inviſible God) may be effectual to remove all other Images and likeneſſes, of God out of our minds: But then we muſt be careful that we do not terminate our conceptions of God in the Man-Chriſt, or in the Manhood of Chriſt, for then we ſhall make the Humane Nature of Chriſt the Image of the Godhead, and that would be an Idol. But when we have taken up an apprehenſion of the Humanity of Chriſt, if our Conceptions paſs through the vail into the Holieſt; if we are led thereby to worſhip that Godhead that dwels in it, this is a right Conception and true Worſhip.

Mr. *Byfield* Comment. on 1 Pet. 2. 12. p. 410.

The Humanity of Chriſt was to the Godhead as a back of metal to a Cryſtial Glaſs; Look on ſuch a glaſs in its pure ſubſtance, and it is tranſparent; put a back of metal to it, and it gives a beautiful reflex: So if we take up Conceptions of the Godhead in its pure eſſence, it is tranſparent: If we conſider God Infinite, Almighty, Immenſe, Eternal, what is this to the Creature, or our comfort? If we conſider him in his Power, Juſtice, Wiſdom, Holineſs, Goodneſs, Truth; what is this to us? Yea, all theſe are againſt us as we are ſinners; But if we take up Conceptions of God in all theſe Attributes, as they appear to us in Chriſt, as they are backt with the Humanity of Chriſt, ſo they make a moſt comfortable reflex upon us; In this glaſs we behold the Glory of the Lord, and are changed into the ſame ſimilitude from Glory to Glory by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18. In this Glaſs we behold that Wiſdom

dom by which we are inſtructed, that Righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified, that Power by which we are preſerved, that Grace by which we are choſen and called, that Goodneſs by which we are relieved and ſupplied, that Holineſs by which we are transformed, that Glory to which we ſhall be confirmed.

The Concluſion of all this is, *That our right apprehenſions and due Conceptions of God, muſt ſpring from the manifeſtations of God in Jeſus Chriſt.*

How

How are we to live by Faith on Divine Providence?

Pſal. LXII. 8.

Truſt in Him at all times, ye People.

THeſe *Words* are a ſerious and *Pathetick Exhortation* to a moſt Important and *Spiritual duty*. In *them* we *obſerve*,

I. The *Duty* propoſed and *enjoyned*, i.e. (*a*) *Truſt*. Truſt in Him. *Confide in*, or ſecurely *repoſe* your ſelves upon him, for Aſſiſtance, *ſupport*, direction, protection, *proviſion*, Deliverance, *Compleat Salvation*.

a A בטח *Confiſcus eſt. Fiduciam poſuit.*

II. *The ſubjects of this Truſt*, Or the *perſons on* whom this Duty is *incumbent*, and from whom it is *expected*, i.e. *ye people*. Wherein we *note*,

1. The *Echphoneſis* that lies *couchant* in the words, which is apt to *excite* Intention and *Affection*, q.d. *O ye People*. So the *Arabick* Tranſlator renders the word, *O Populi*.

2. The *Univerſality of its Concernment*, To *all* People: 'Tis an *Indefinite* expreſſion, and holds *parallel* with an *Univerſal*: *ye* (b) *People*, q.d. O *All* ye People, *of what* Sex, age, degree, *condition*, relation *ſoever*. Thus the *Septuagint* render the word, πάσα σύναγωγὴ λαοῦ, and the *Vulgar* follows them: ſc. *Omnis Congregatio populi*.

b עם *Singulare collectivum pro plurali, per ſyntheſin Hebreis uſitatiſſimam. Moller.*

3. The *ſpeciality of its obligation*, on *ſome* People, *more* than others. 'Tis *True*, *All* the *families* of the Earth muſt *Truſt* in God; But there is a μαλισὰ δὲ, A more *Special Tye* that lies on the *Houſhold* of Faith, the *Commonwealth* of *Iſrael*, the *Aſſemblies* of the Saints, thoſe that are the *dearly beloved of Gods Soul*. *Theſe* are ſtrongly obliged, *beyond*, and *above* all others, To *Truſt* in the Lord *Their* God. *Thus* the *Chaldee Paraph. Populo, Domus Iſrael*, and the *Pſalmiſt* elſewhere, *Pſal.* 115. 9, 11, O *Iſrael*, *truſt* in the Lord; *ye that fear the Lord*, whether Jew or Gentile, *truſt* in the Lord.

3. *The grand object of this holy truſt*, or the *perſon* in whom this *truſt* muſt be *repoſed*: viz. *in him*. i.e. the *Lord* Jehovah: as appears from *verſ.* 7. In (*c*) *him*,

(c) *him*, and in him *alone*; 'Tis an *excluſive* Particle. In *him*, and in nothing beſides *him*. c *Ei. i. e.* Ei ſoli Jun. Tremel.

4. *The Modification of this truſt*, or the *Circumſtance* of the time *when*, and the Duration *How long* this *Truſt* is to be *exerted*.

1. *Quando: When* muſt we Truſt? At *what time?*

Sol. At *all times*, *Omni Hora* Every Hour: So the *Syr. verſion*. As a *true* friend is *to love*, ſo a *ſound* Believer is to *Truſt* at (d) all times. d Prov. 17. 17.

2. *Quamdiu:* The *Duration* of this Truſt, *How long?*

Sol. *All the day long*, Pſal. 44. 8. All *our lives long: All the days* of their appointed time. Gods *Jobs* muſt not only *wait*, but *truſt* till their *change* come; Yea, *for ever*, Iſa. 26. 4. nay, *for ever and ever*, Pſal. 52. 8.

Having thus *unlockt* the *Cabinet*; The *Jewel*, or *Truth*, that we find *laid* up in it, is *this*, viz.

It is the great indiſpenſible Duty of all Believers, at all times to truſt in the Lord, and in him alone. Obſervat.

All that I have to *ſay* on this *practical* Truth, I ſhall *Couch* under theſe *ſix Generals*.

1. Ὅτι That *truſting* in God, is a Believers *Duty*.

2. *What* it is to *truſt* in God?

3. *What* is, and ought to be *the grand and ſole object of* a Believers truſt?

4. What are thoſe *ſure and ſtable Grounds*, thoſe Corner-ſtones on which the *Faithful* may firmly *Build* their *truſt* in God?

5. *What* are thoſe *ſpecial* and *ſignal ſeaſons*, which call aloud for the *exerting* of this *truſt?*

6. How *Faith* or *Truſt* puts forth, *exerts demeans, beſtirs* it ſelf in *ſuch ſeaſons?*

1. Ὅτι, That *Truſting in God is a Believers Duty*. The *Lord is*, or at *leaſt* he *ſhould* be the (e) *Confidence* of all the ends of the Earth, *Pſal.* 65. 5. *Truſt in the Lord with all thy Heart*, Prov. 3. 5. On the *Arm* of his *Power*, *Iſa.* 51. 5. On the (f) *Word* of his *Truth*, in his faithful *promiſes*, in his freeſt *mercies*, Pſal. 52. 8. In his full *Salvation*, Pſal. 78. 22. e *Meton. Adjuncti. Actus pro Objecto.* f *In verbis ejus.* So *Chald. Paraph.* renders our Text. *Sol.*

2. *What it is to truſt in God.*

1. *Negatively*, To *preſume* on God, to *tempt* God, to *conceive falſe hopes* of Gods gracious *favour* and protection, *whilſt in a way of ſin*, is *not* to truſt in God. To *gallop* down a *precipice*, and to ſay *confidently*, I ſhall *not fall*; to *caſt our ſelves down headlong* from a Pinacle of the Temple, and *yet to expect the protection of Angels:* Mat. 4. 6, 7. To Teach for *Hire*, and to Divine for *Money*, and yet *to* (g) *lean* upon the Lord, *ſaying*, Is not the *Lord* among us? *None evil can come upon us:* To *bleſs* a mans ſelf *in his heart*, and to *ſay* he ſhall have *peace*, *though* he walk in the *imaginations* of his *evil heart*, *Deut.* 29. 19. All this is not to *Truſt* in *God*, but to truſt in (i) *Vanity*, and to *ſpin the Spiders web*; Job 8. 13, 14. g Mic. 3. 11. i Job 15. 31.

2. *Poſitively*, And ſo more *generally*, and more *particularly*.

1. *More Generally*, to *truſt* in God, is to *caſt* (k) our burthen *on the Lord* when 'tis too *heavy* for our own *ſhoulder:* To *dwell* in the *ſecret* k Pſal. 55. 22.

l Pſal. 91. 1. (*l*) *places* of the *Moſt High*, when we know not where *to lay* our Heads *on earth.* To *look to our Maker*, and to have reſpect to the Holy One of

m Iſa. 36. 6. *Iſrael*, *Iſa.* 17. 7. To (*n*) *lean* on our Beloved, *Cant.* 8. 5. To *ſtay* our ſelves when *ſinking*, on the *Lord our God*, Iſa. 26. 3. In a word: *Truſt* in God, is *that High Act or Exerciſe of Faith, whereby the Soul looking upon God, and caſting of its ſelf on His goodneſs, power promiſes, faithfulneſs, and providence, is lifted up above carnal fears, and diſcouragements, above perplexing doubts and diſquietments, either for the obtaining and continuance of that which is good, or for the preventing or removing of that which is evil.*

2. *More particularly:* For the *clearer* diſcovery of the *Nature* of *Divine truſt*, we ſhall *lay* before you, It's *Ingredients*, *Concomitants*, *Effects*.

I. *The ingredients of truſt in God.* They are *three*,

1. *A clear knowledg*, or *Right apprehenſion of God, as revealed in His*

o Pſal. 9. 10. *Word and Works.* They, and *they only* that (*o*) *know* thy Name, will *truſt* in thee. The *grand* Reaſon, *why* God is ſo little truſted, is *becauſe* He is ſo little known. *Knowledg of God* is of ſuch neceſſity to a Right *truſt*, that it is put as a *Synonyma* for truſt. I will ſet him on high, *be-*

p Pſal. 91. 14. *cauſe* he hath (*p*) *known* (*i.e.* Truſted in) *my name.*

2. *A full Aſſent of the underſtanding, and Conſent of the will, to Thoſe Divine Revelations, as true and good, wherein the Lord propoſeth himſelf as an Adequate Object for our truſt.* This Act the *Greeks* expreſs by *the word* Πιςεύειν. The *Latines* by *Credere*, *Fidem habere*. *Teſtimonium recipere*: The *Hebrews* by האמן. All importing *believing* or giving *credit* to.

q Exod. 14. 31. Thus the *Iſraelites* are ſaid to (*q*) *believe the Lord* and his Servant *Moſes:* And thus the *Soul* that *truſts*, looks upon the words of *Promiſe*;

r 1 Tim. 1. 15. ὡς πασοὶ ᾗ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς (r) ἄξιοι; as *faithful* and *worthy* of all *acceptation.*

3. *A firm and fixed reliance, Reſting, or Recumbency of the whole Soul on God*; or a *firm perſwaſion*, and eſpecial *Confidence* of the *Heart*, whereby a Believer *particularly applies* to himſelf the *faithful* Promiſes of God, and certainly *Concludes* and *determines* with himſelf, that the Lord is *able* and *willing* to *make good* to him the good *promiſes he* hath *made. This* indeed is the very *formality* of *truſt*; one of the Higheſt and *Nobleſt* Acts of *Faith. This* is *that* which the *Greeks* term πεποίθησις, and which *Paul* ſo frequently uſeth in ſeveral of his *Epiſtles.* Thus *Abraham* is ſaid, to

s Rom. 4. 21. be *ſtrong in Faith*, giving glory to God; and was *fully* (*s*) *perſwaded*, that what he had *promiſed*, he was *able* and *willing* to *perform.* This the *Latins* call *Fiducia*; The Schools *Fiducia fidei*, the *Hebrews* by a word that ſignifies *to lean on*, or caſt the *weight* of ones body on, for *ſupport* and ſtay. Thus, *Iſa.* 10. 20, The houſe of *Jacob* ſhall no more *ſtay* upon

t נשׁשׁו *firmiter innitotur. incumbet.* him that ſmote them, but *ſhall* (t) *ſtay* upon the *Lord* the *Holy One* of *Iſrael* in *truth. Thus* for the *ingredients* of truſt.

2. *The Concomitants of an Holy truſt*, and theſe are,

u שלום *pacem* שלם *pacem.* 1. *An holy quietneſs, ſecurity, and peaceableneſs of Spirit ſpringing from a full perſwaſion of our ſafety.* By *this* the Soul is freed from *diſtracting* cares and *jealouſies*, about our ſtate and condition. Hence *that* of the Prophet, *Iſa.* 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him *in perfect* (u) *peace*, whoſe mind

is

is *ſtaied* on thee, becauſe he *truſteth* in thee. An *holy* ſecurity *Iſay*, not *a carnal* ſecurity, like *theirs* mentioned, *Zeph.* 1. 12. that were *ſettled on their lees*, that ſaid in their *hearts*, the Lord *will not do good*, neither *will he do evil*: *nor* like *that* of the *ſcarlet* whore, *Rev.* 18. 6, that *ſays* in heart, *I ſit as a Queen, & ſhall ſee no ſorrow.* *No*, but an *holy* ſecurity *as* we have it, *Prov.* 18. 10. The *Name* of the Lord is a *ſtrong tower*, the righteous *runneth* to it, *i. e.* by the *feet* of *truſt*, and is * *ſafe*: As *ſafe* as a man *judgeth* himſelf to be, when *got* into an *high tower well fortified*, and *fears* not the *ſharpeſt* or *ſwifteſt* darts that can be *ſhot* againſt him. *Safe* as the *chickens* take themſelves to be, when *houſed* under the x *Covert* of their *Dam's* wing, *Pſal.* 46. 1. Or *ſafe* as the *manſlayer* is from the purſuit of the *Avenger*, when *Lodg'd* in a City of *Refuge*. *Thus* when a man *truſts* in God, he doth ſweetly *acquieſce* and repoſe himſelf in Gods *boſome*, troubles himſelf *no more*, caſts no *jealous* thoughts about his *condition*. Thus *David* reſolves, I will lay me down *in peace*, and *ſleep*, for thou *Lord* makeſt me to dwell *in* y *ſafety*, *or in truſt*, Pſal. 4. 8.

* ונשגב *Et exaltabatur. Celſus ab alto, infra ſe cernens Hominum genus. Sil. Ital.* x *ut pulli ſub alis galli-næ.*

y לבטח *Cofidenter.*

2. *A Stedfaſt, well-grounded Hope.* Truſt and Hope are *Gemini*, Twins, born together, bred up together; hence often conjoyn'd in Scripture. *Thou art my Hope* z *O Lord God, thou art my Truſt from my youth: And bleſſed is the man, that* a *truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe Hope the Lord is.* Hence the *Septuagint* uſually render the word put for Truſt, as alſo in the Text, בטחו ἐλπίσατε, and *Ar. Mont.* and divers others, *Sperate.* Hope ye in the Lord; Hope then is that *Fidus Achates*, the Faithful Companion of Truſt. Now in this Hope there are two things:

z Pſal. 71. 5.
a Jer 17. 7. Pſal 119, 42, 43, 49.

1. *An holy and confident expectation, and looking after Gods gracious preſence.* Truſt believes, and Hope expects to enjoy what God has promiſed. Thus the Prophet, *Iſa.* 8. 17, *I will wait upon the Lord, and I will* (b) *look for him.* Hope looks, and looks out, as expecting Gods appearing; Not as *Siſera*'s Mother once did, who looked for a victorious ſucceſs, and expected that her ſon ſhould have returned a triumphant Conqueror, richly laden with ſpoils and booty, when as the wretch lay (c) bleeding at the foot of *Jael*: Nor like thoſe ſinful miſerable people, who (d) looked for peace, but behold, no good came. No, ſuch a vain groundleſs Hope, draws a bluſh into the cheek, and covers the face with confuſion. But this is an Hope which makes not (e) aſhamed: whoſe earneſt expectation ſhall aſſuredly end in ſweet fruition.

b וקויתי *Et expectabo eum.*
c Judg. 5. 28.
d Jer. 7. 15.
e Rom. 5. 5.

2. *An humble and conſtant waiting on Gods Leiſure.* Looking out, and waiting on God, both put together. f *Therefore I will look unto the Lord. I will wait for the God of my Salvation; my God will hear me.* Faith gets up to the top of its watch-tower, looks out, ſees whether relief be coming. But ſuppoſe none appears in *Kenne*; Suppoſe help defer'd. Yet now it waits, and tarries Gods time. Faith knocks at Heavens Gate, no anſwer from within; Faith knocks again, ſtill there is ſilence; However Faith concludes, my God will hear, yea, and anſwer too; but 'tis fit I ſhould wait his time. g *The viſion is for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie: Though it tarry, I muſt and will wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* Thus *David*, *My*

f Mic. 7. 7.
g Hab. 2. 3.

b Pſal. 62. 5. b *Soul wait thou only upon God*, or keep thou ſilence unto God, *for my expectation is from him*: *David*, when he ſhuts his mouth, opens his ear; waits and liſtens what God will ſay, and concludes, *Contra Gentes*, the Lord will in his own beſt time ſpeak peace, *Pſal.* 85. 8.

3. *An humble, holy, and undaunted Confidence.* Thus *Solomon*, in the fear of the Lord, in the filial, awful, reverential fear of God, here is ſtrong c Confidence, and his children ſhall have a place of refuge, *Prov.* 14. 26. This holy confidence is nothing elſe but Faith peg'd up to it's *Els.* A confident Soul moves in an higher Orb than other Saints, leads up the *Van* of the *Militia* of Heaven. As *Patience* is nothing elſe but *Hope lengthned*: ſo *Confidence* is *nothing leſs* than *Faith ſtrengthned*; the very *Spirits*, the meer *Elixar* of Faith, which carries with it.

c טכטחיען *fiducia fortitudinis.*

1 *Chriſtian Courage and* * *Fortitude*, oppoſite to *Carnal fear* and deſpondency of ſpirit. d *Behold*, God is my Salvation, *I will truſt and not be afraid*, for the Lord *Jehovah* is my *ſtrength*. e He ſhall *not* be *afraid* of evil tidings, his *Heart* is fixed, *truſting* in the Lord. Thus *David* undauntedly, the *Lord* is my *Light* and my Salvation, *whom ſhall I fear*? The Lord is the *ſtrength* of my life, of whom ſhall I be *afraid*? Pſal. 27. 1. His *Confidence* in God, quite *extinguiſht* in him all baſe, *ſneaking fear* of man, *Pſal.* 56. 4.

* *Beatus ille, qui undiq; petitus, firmius ſtetit: qui exhauſis Dæmonis phareiram nec concedit, imo ne de gradu quidem tantis permotus eſt.* Nic.

d Iſa. 12. 2.
e Pſal. 112. 7. 91. 5. 46. 1, 2, 3.

2. *Chriſtian boldneſs and Adventurouſneſs*, oppoſite to Cowardice. Holy Confidence *ſteels* the heart of f *Joſeph of Arimathea*, to go in *Boldly* to *Pilate*, and to *beg* the Body of Jeſus. *This* was *that* enabled *David* to encounter *Goliah*, that made him *dare* to take a *Bear* by the teeth, yea, and a *Lyon* by the *Beard*. 'Tis for *ſluggards* to ſay *there's a Lyon* in the way, *Prov.* 22. 13. but let a *Believer* that makes God his *Truſt*, but once *Know* his *Duty*, it is *enough*, he will with a * Couragious and *undaunted* mind, chearfully *undertake* it, and commit both *himſelf* and the *ſucceſs* to God, *Acts* 4. 13, 19—20. 22.—21. 13, *Jer.* 7. 7, 8, 9. *Dan.* 3. 17, 18. *Eſther* 4 16. *Heb.* 10. 34. to 40.

f Mark. 15. 43. τολμήσας.

* *Invictus ad labores, fortis ad pericula, rigidus adverſus voluptates, durus adverſus illecebras.* Ambroſ

3. *Holy and humble Boaſting*, oppoſite to ſinful *Concealing* of what *God* hath done *for us*. A believer that *dares not* Boaſt of *himſelf* or *riches*, of any thing *within* that has *no Confidence* in the fleſh, yet dares g boaſt *of his God*. In God *we boaſt all the day long*, and praiſe *thy Name* for ever. Thus the *Church*, challenges the *eyes* and *ears* of *All* that were round about her, ſaying, *Lo*, this, *this is our God*, we have *waited* for him, and *he* hath *ſaved us*, Iſa. 25. 9.

g Pſal. 44. 8.

III. *The Effects of an holy Truſt*, and they are ſuch *as theſe*;

1. *Fervent, effectual, conſtant Prayer*. Thus in our *text*, *Truſt* in him at all times, ye people, *pour out your hearts before him*. Pſ. 62. 8. while *Joſhuah* is in the *Valley* conflicting with *Amalek*, *Moſes* gets him up into the Mount *to h Pray*. *Moſes* knew *full well*, that as *Prayer* without *Faith*, is but a *beating* of the Air; ſo *Truſt* without *Prayer*, was but a preſumptuous *Bravado*. He that *promiſes* to *give*, and bids us *truſt* his *promiſes*, *Commands* us to *pray*, and expects obedience to his *Commands*. He will *give*, but not *without* our *asking*, Ezek. 36. 37. Pſ. 50. 15.

h Exod. 17. 9 11. Pſal. 86. 1, 2. 1 John 5. 14. Pſal. 18. 2, 3.

2. *Sincere, univerſal, ſpiritual, cheerful, conſtant, Obedience*, They that

expect

expect to *enjoy* what God *promiſes*, will be *ſure* to *perform* what God *injoyns*. Holy *truſt* takes it for a *maxim*, that he that *contemns* the *Commands* of a God, as his *Soveraign*, has *no* ſhare in the *promiſes* of a God as *Allſufficient*. If we *truſt* in the Son with *a Faith of Confidence*, we ſhall be *ſure* to *honour* the Son with a i *Kiſs of obedience*. Thus *David*, Pſal. 119. 166, I have *hoped* for thy Salvation, and *done thy Command*. As *Faith* ſhews it ſelf by its *Works*, Jam. 2. 18. So *truſt* diſcovers it ſelf by its *obedience*; *Eſpecially* in the uſe *of ſuch means* as God *preſcribes* for the bringing about his *appointed End*. If *Naaman* will prove, that he *truſts* the God of *Iſrael*, he muſt go and *waſh* in *Jordan*. True indeed, the waters of *Bethesda* could not *cure*, unleſs the *Angel ſtirred* thoſe waters: and yet the *Angel* would not *cure*, *without* thoſe *waters*. *Paul* truſted that himſelf, and the *men* with him ſhould all get *ſafe* to Land, but *then* 'twas with this *Proviſo*, that they all *kept* in the ſhip. Gods *means* are to be *uſed*, as *well* as Gods *Bleſſing* to be *expected*.

i Pſal. 2. 12.

Act. 27. 24. 31.

3. *Soul-raviſhing*, *Heart-inlivening Joy*. Thus *David*, I have *truſted* in thy mercy, my *Heart* ſhall *rejoyce* in thy Salvation, Pſal. 13. 5. If the Lord be our *truſt* and ſtrength, he will be, he *cannot* but be our *joy* and k *ſong*. In whom *believing*; let me add, *in whom truſting*, ye *rejoyce* with joy *unſpeakable* and full of *Glory*, 1 Pet. 21. 8. Thus *truſt* and *joy* are linkt and *lodg'd* together in that *Pſal.* 64. 10. The Righteous ſhall be *glad* in the Lord, and ſhall *truſt* in him, and all the *upright* in heart ſhall *Glory*. See to what a *Cue* of joy *Habakkuk's* truſt had raiſed him, *Hab.* 3. 17 18, 19. The Soul that truly *truſts*, cannot but *ſit* down under Gods ſhadow *with great* l *delight*: His *fruit* muſt needs be *exceeding ſweet* to our taſte. Is m *Jonah* exceeding *glad* with the *ſhadow* of his *Gourd*? how then muſt a *Saint* needs *rejoyce* in the *protection* of a *God*? *and thus* I have diſpatcht the *ſecond General* propoſed, *viz.* a full *diſcovery* of the *Nature of truſt* in God, *what* it is, what its *ingredients*, *concomitants*, *effects*. I *proceed* to the *third*, viz.

k Iſa. 12, 2.

l Can. 2. 3.

m Jon. 4. 6.

III. *What is*, *or at leaſt ought to be the Grand and Sole Object of a Believers truſt*?

Sol. The *text* and *Doctrine* tells us. It is *the Lord Jehovah*, and he *alone*. He is, or at *leaſt* ſhould be,

1. *The grand Object of a Believers truſt*. Put your truſt *in the* n *Lord*. In whom ſhould a *Dying* creature *truſt*, but in a o *living* God! in ſtormy and *tempeſtuous* times, though we *may not* run to the *Bramble*, yet we *muſt* to *this* p *Rock* for refuge. When the Sun *burns hot* and ſcorches, a *Jonah's Gourd* will prove *Inſignificant*; No q *ſhadow* like that of a *Gods Wings*.

n Pſal. 4. 5.

o 1. Tim. 4. 10.

p Iſa. 26. 4.

q Pſal. 36. 7.

2. *The grand Object of a Believers truſt*. Holy *truſt*, an Act of Worſhip *proper* and *peculiar* to an Holy *God*. *No* creature muſt *ſhare* in it, *whatever* we *truſt* in (*unleſs* it be in *ſubordination* unto God) we make it our *God*, or at leaſt our *Idol*. True *truſt* in God takes us off the *hinges* of all *other* confidences; As we cannot *ſerve*, ſo we cannot *truſt God* and *Mammon*. There muſt be but *one ſtring* to the *Bow* of our truſt, and *that is the Lord*. More *particularly*, we may not, *muſt* not repoſe

an

an holy *truſt* in any thing beſides *God*, either *within* us, or *without* us.

1. *Not in any thing within us:* And ſo,

1. *Not in our Heads, Underſtanding, Wiſdom, Policy, No* ſafe *leaning to our own* r *Underſtanding. Carnal* Wiſdom is but an *ignis fatuus*, that miſleads into a *Bog*, and there leaves us. Thy *Wiſdom*, and thy *Knowledg*, *it* hath *perverted* thee, *Iſa.* 40. 17. He that is *wiſe in his own eyes*, will be found *at laſt* to *ſtand* in his *own* light.

r Prov. 3. 5.

g Prov. 28 26. h Jer. 17. 9.

2. Not *in our own hearts.* It is g *folly*, the height of folly, to truſt thoſe *Lumps* of fleſh, that are ſo h *deceitful*, ſo *deſperately* wicked.

i Eccl. 12. 1, 2, 3.

3. Not *in our bodily ſtrength and vigour.* Thoſe *hands* that are now *able* to *break a bow* of ſteel, will eſtſoon, *hang down* and *i* faint. The moſt *brawny Arm*, utterly *unable* to *ward off*, or *wreſtle* with the aſſaults of *Death* or *Sickneſs.* Thoſe *Legs* which now *ſtand* like Pillars of *Braſs*, will ſhortly appear to be, what *indeed* they are, but ſinking *Pillars* of mouldring *clay.* Raiſe the *ſtrength* of man to its higheſt Axiad, yet even then, it cannot make ſo much *as one* k *hair* either *white* or *black.*

k Mat. 5. 36.

4. Not *in any natural or acquired Excellencies.* Be they what they *will*, or ſhould they be far *more* than they *are:* Should *all the Lines* of Created *Perfections* meet in *one* man, as in their *Center*, yet ſurely *that man* in that his *beſt eſtate* is *altogether* l *vanity*, and *therefore* not to be *truſted* in.

l Pſal. 39. 5.

II. *Not in any thing without us.* To truſt in any Creature without us, is to *feed* not ſo much on *bread* as m *Aſhes*, or *rather* on *gravel-ſtones*, which may eaſily *break* the *Teeth*, but can never *fill* the *Belly.*

m Iſa. 44. 20.

n Jer. 9. 23. o Pſal. 52. 8. p 1 Tim. 6. 17. q Prov. 23. 5.

1. *Not in* n *riches*: No not in the *o abundance* of Riches. Though riches *encreaſe*, our *hearts* muſt not be *ſet* upon them. *Riches*, when in their fulleſt *flow*, are moſt p *uncertain.* Wilt thou therefore *ſet* thine eyes *on that which is* q *not?* Though they *ſeem* to have a *being*, yet they are *indeed* but *fair faced nothings*, gilded *vanities.* Or ſuppoſe they *are*, yet the *next moment* they may *not be.* Like *Birds* on the *wing*, ready to take their *flight. Treaſures* then are not to be made our *truſt.*

r Prov. 11. 4. ſ Mark 10. 24.

They cannot r *profit* in the day of *wrath.* Nay, if we *truſt* in our Riches on *Earth*, never expect a *portion* in *Heaven. Sooner* ſhall the ſ *Camel* go through the Eye of a *Needle*, than ſuch an one *paſs* through the *gate* of glory.

t Pſal. 115. 8.

2. *Not in* t *Idols, Baal, Dagon, Aſhteroth*, and the whole pack of thoſe ſenſleſs abominations, cannot ſave themſelves, much leſs can they preſerve their bewitched Votaries.

3. *Not in man, or humane Allies or Aſſiſtances*, Pſal. 62. 9, 10. *Ægypt* and all her Chariots when truſted in, prove not ſupporting ſtaffs, but broken Reeds, which run into the ſide, and bear not up, but wound the body, 2 *King* 18. 24. *Jer.* 46. 25. If the ſhadow of *Ægypt* be our truſt, the end of that truſt will be our confuſion, *Iſa.* 30. 2, 3. Might we build the neſt of our truſt on the Sons of men, Reaſon would bid us pitch on the topmoſt branches of the talleſt Cedars, I mean thoſe earthly gods, the Princes of this world. But alas theſe, though ſtyled gods, muſt dye like

like men, *Pſal.* 82. 6, yea, like other men. Their breath is in their noſtrils, they ſoon return to their duſt from whence they ſprang, and then all their thoughts, and with them our hopes on them, periſh, *Pſal.* 146. 4.

4. *Not in any thing clad in mortal fleſh.* He that preſumes to make fleſh his Arm, will be ſure at a long run, to find the Father of Spirits his Foe. Thus ſaith the Lord, *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his Arm, Jer.* 17. 5. And thus we have diſpatcht the third general.

IV. *What are thoſe ſure and ſtable grounds on which Saints may firmly and ſecurely build their truſt on God?*

Sol. There is nothing which the eye of Faith or Reaſon can diſcover in God, but the arm of Truſt may ſafely lean on. But more particularly.

1. *Gods Almighty Arm and Power.* The Lord hath an Arm, an outſtretched *n* Arm; an Hand, an Omnipotent Hand: An Hand that ſpans the *o* Heavens, that ſtretched them out as a Curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in. On this Almighty Arm may Believers *p* truſt: the Lord is the ſtrong and mighty God, *Pſal.* 24. 8, that created the World with a *q* word, and can as eaſily ſpeak or look it into its firſt Nothing. He is a wonder-working God, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Elſhaddai, Gen.* 17. 1. Able to do ὑπὲρ ἐκ περισσοῦ far more exceeding *r* abundantly than we can ask or think; his vaſt power far exceeds our wants, prayers, thoughts, all that we can need, beg, imagine; we want much, can ask great things, can think greater. Our Imaginations exceed our Expreſſions: Yet Gods power far exceeds both *ſ*. Open we our mouths never ſo wide, his open hand can more than fill them. Gods power then is a moſt firm *Baſis*, whereon to fix our truſt. Truſt ye in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord Jehovah is *t* Everlaſting ſtrength. Creature-props are not able to bear the weight and ſtreſs of an immortal ſoul. They are ſandy foundations, apt to ſink and crumble under us. But an Almighty God is a Rock, a Rock of Ages, on which he that builds his confidence, though the Winds blow, the rain deſcends, and the Storms beat upon him, *yet ſhall he not* u *fall.* On this power of God *Abraham* built his tranſcendent * faith, and *David* his impregnable truſt, 2 *Sam.* 22. 2, 3.

n 1 Kings 8. 42.
o Iſa. 40. 22.
p Iſa. 51. 5.
q Pſal. 33. 9.
r Eph. 3. 20.
ſ Pſal. 81. 20.
t צוּר עוֹלָמִים *Petra ſæculorum.*
u Mat. 7. 25.
* Rom. 4. 20.

2. *Gods infinite and free Goodneſs, Mercy, and Bounty. The Lord is good to all, and his tender* x *mercies are over all his works.* With the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption; his Bowels are as tender as his Arm is ſtrong. He is no leſs willing than able to relieve; Therefore let *Iſrael* hope in the Lord. It is the *Pſalmiſts* y inference. *Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord* z *pitieth them that fear him.* That Father that ſees his child in want, and pities not; and pitying, if able, relieves not, forfeits the name of Father, and may write himſelf not Man, but Monſter. It is enough for our heavenly Father, that he *a* knows we have need of any thing. The Lord is all that to his people, yea, and infinitely more than that which *Iſis Mammoſa*

x Pſal. 145. 9.
y Pſal. 130. 7.
z Pſal. 103. 13.
a Mat. 6. 32.

was

was to the *Ægyptians*. A God full of Dugs; and whilſt he hath a Breaſt, let not Saints fear the want of Milk. The Character that the Heathens *Idolatrouſly* gave their *Jupiter*, may far more truly, indeed only, be aſcribed to our *Jehovah*, He alone is that τὸς τὲ μέγας τὲ that *Optimus Maximus*, The beſt, as well as the greateſt of Beings. Goodneſs is Gods darling Attribute; it is that which he looks on as his glory. *I beſeech thee,* [b] Exod. 33. 18. ſaith *Moſes*, *ſhew me thy* b *glory*. *Moſes*, thy Prayer is heard, and it ſhall be anſwered. But what ſays God in anſwer to this requeſt? See *verſ.* 19, *I will make all my goodneſs paſs before thee*. The thing requeſted, was a view of Gods Glory: The things promiſed was a diſcovery of Gods goodneſs. Which hints unto us, that however all the Attributes of God are in themſelves glorious, yet the Lord glorieth moſt in the manifeſtation of his goodneſs. So then, though we have nothing to plead, or prevail with God, as in or from our ſelves, yet there is an *Orator* in his own boſom, that will certainly and effectually intercede for our relief, and that is his goodneſs. This was that, that buoyed up *Da-* [c] Pſal. 27. 13. *vid*, this was the Cordial that kept him from fainting; c *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living*.

3. *God's many, choice, exceeding great, and precious Promiſes*. Theſe are the flagons that faith keeps by her, the apples ſhe hath hoarded up in ſtore, to revive and quicken in a day of ſwooning. Who will not truſt the Word, the Promiſe, the Proteſt of the King of Kings? God hath ſaid, I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee, *d Heb.* 13. 5. The Greek here hath five Negatives, and may thus be rendred: I will not, not leave thee, neither will I not, not forſake thee. Five times, as one obſerves, is this precious promiſe renewed, that we may ſuck, and be ſatisfied with the Breaſts of its Conſolations, that we may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of its glory. Leave us, God may to our thinking, but really he doth not, will [illegible] he leaves us for a time, a ſmall moment, yet he will not forſake [illegible]. Differ he may, but not diſinherit; forſake us, it may be, in regard [illegible] of Union; change his Diſpenſation, not his Diſpoſition [illegible]. [e] Iſa. 43. 2. *through the waters*? Thy God hath promiſed to be with thee: He was ſo with *Noah* and the *Iſraelites* in the Red Sea, and in *Jordan*. *Doſt thou walk through the fire?* Warm'd thou mayſt be, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee. The three Children were living Monuments of this truth, God ſent [f] Dan. 3. 28. his Angel, and delivered his Servants f that truſted in him. The Lord hath graciouſly engaged to create upon every dwelling place of Mount *Sion*, [g] Iſa. 4 5, 6. and upon her aſſemblies a cloud and g ſmoak by day, for her protection, and the ſhining of a flaming fire by night for direction; to be a Shield and Sun, yea, and ſhadow from the heat, and a place of refuge, and a Covert [h] Pſal. 119. 49, 50. from ſtorm, and from rain. In ſuch promiſes as theſe holy *David* h truſted: This was his comfort in his affliction, the word of his God quickned him. Gods Promiſes are ſome of his Bonds and Obligations whereby he is held ſtrongly bound to Believers. Theſe faith makes bold to put in ſuit, to plead the ſecurity that God hath given: Lord, ſaith Faith, here

[d] οὐ μὴ οὐδὲ οὐ μὴ: Never, in no wiſe, in no caſe, whatever I do, I will not do this, whatever ſhift I make.

here is thy Bill obligatory, [illegible]e here thy hand and ſeal: Diſcern, I pray thee, whoſe are thes[illegible]net, and Bracelets, and Staff. Thus *David*, Pſal. 119. 49. *Remem[illegible]word unto thy Servant, wherein thou haſt cauſed me to hope:* The [illegible]romiſe was all that *David* had to ſhew, and he counts that enough[illegible]Faith on work.

4. *God's inviolable[illegible], never failing* * *Faithfulneſs.* Gods goodneſs inclines him to ma[illegible]Promiſes, and his faithfulneſs engages him to make thoſe Promi[illegible]If the word be once gone out of his mouth, † *Heaven and ea[illegible]ooner paſs away, than one Iota of that word fail.* This faithfulneſs [illegible] (i) *Joſhua* aſſerts to the heighth: throws down the *Gauntlet*, and [illegible]if were challenge all *Iſrael* to ſhew but that one thing that God [illegible]d them in, of all the good things that he had promiſed. If God i[illegible]) faithfulneſs afflicts, to make good his threatnings; much more in [illegible]s will he preſerve, to make good his promiſes. God never yet [illegible]will fail that man that puts his truſt in him, *Pſal.* 9. 10. [illegible]God may frown on, yea, and ſeverely laſh a *Solomon*, a *Jedidiah*, [illegible]ey break his Statutes, and keep not his Commandments: Nev[illegible]his loving kindneſs he will not utterly take from them, nor ſuff[illegible] (l) faithfulneſs to fail. God never yet brake his word by deceiving, nor [illegible]t his credit by compounding for leſs than was due, with any Mortal living. So faithful is God, ſo true to his Word, that let God but promiſe a Victory, and *Jehoſhaphat* will ſound an *Io* Triumph (m) before the Battel; And let but he threaten *Babylons* ruins, and the Angel crys, *Babylon* (n) is faln. Thus then Gods faithfulneſs calls for Saints truſt, *Pſal.* 146. 5, 6.

* 1 Cor. 10. 13

† Luk. 21. 33.

i Joſh. 23. 14, 15.

k Pſal. 119. 75.

l Pſal. 89. 33.

m 2 Chron. 20. 17, &c.

n Rev. 14. 8.

5. *Gods moſt holy, wiſe, powerful, gracious providence.* This alſo is a prop for truſt. It is the (o) Lord, that gives unto all life, and breath, and all things. It is in him we all live and move, and have our being. The (p) eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding of, and providing for the evil and the good. This Divine providence the *Egyptians* acknowledged, and held forth in that ſignificant *Hieroglyphick* of a Sun pourtrayed in a Ship toſſed with wind and water, *Euſeb. de prepar. Evang. l.* 3. *c.* 3. God hath an eye in the wheels and motions of all inferiour creatures, *Ezek.* 1. 18, 20. ὡδὲν ἀπερονόητον ἢ ἡμελημμὸν παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ· πάντα σκοπεύει ὁ ἀκοίμητος ὀφθαλμός. Hence that holy Symbol of our Engliſh *Joſiah*, *Edward* 6. *viz.* A Cœleſtial Globe, with this Motto, *Nihil ſine Deo.* It is the Lord that feeds the *Sparrows* that have no *Barn*, and the *Ravens* that have no *Granary*. It is he that ſo gorgeouſly clothes the *Lilles*, that [illegible] *Diſtaff*. Not a (q) *Bird* deſcends from his *perch*, not an *hair* falls from the *head* without his *Father*. *Fear not then, ye are of more value than many Sparrows.* Where God ſends mouths, he will not grudg meat; And he that feeds the young *Ravens* will not ſtarve the young (r) *Herons*. Faith contemplates what God doth, recounts what God hath done, and from thence concludes what God will do. Hence it prays with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 17. 7. and 31. 19. Faith reflects on former experiences, its own and others, and by the holy skill it hath in the Phyſiognomy of providence, clearly reads and collects what God will do, in what God hath done. It caſts its eye on,

o Act. 17. 25, 28.

p Prov. 15. 8.

[illegible] when dying, to his Wife, ſomewhat deſponding, by reaſon of her many Children, and ſmall proviſion for them.

1. *The experiences of others*; And judges her self to have an interest in those very Providences of grace, which they enjoyed. Thus the Church, a thousand years after that Heavenly combate betwixt God and *Jacob*, tells us, That God found *Jacob* in *Bethel, and there he spake with* s *us*, several ages before they were born: yet with us, *i. e.* with *Jacob* for our good, on our account, for our interest. Faith remembers there was once a *Joseph* in a Prison, a *Jeremy* in a Dungeon, a *Daniel* in a Den, a *Peter* in Chains, an *Hezekiah* on a supposed death-bed, and Providence assisted them, why not me? *This poor man cried, and the Lord helped him, Psal.* 34.6. *and our fathers trusted, and thou didst deliver them*; Psal. 22. 4, 5. Lord thou art the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, why then may not I expect Salvation from thee?

s Hos. 12. 4. *Arrowsmith.* chain 401. 416. *Fenk.* on Jude, part. 1. p. 286.

2. *Its own experiences.* Thus *David* confidently replys to *Saul*, that thought him no match for *Goliah*, t *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the Lion and Bear, will also deliver me from this uncircumcised Philistine.* And thus *Paul*, he had the sentence of death upon him; the black stones were thrown down into the Urn against him, but his God had, and did deliver, and therefore in him he trusts, that he will still *u* deliver.

t 1 Sam. 17. 37.

u 2 Cor. 1. 10.

VI. And Lastly, I argue from *those dear Relations in which the Lord is pleased to stand, and own towards his people.* These *cry aloud* for their *trust* in God. Is he not our * *Creator?* Hath he *built* the house, and will he not *keep* it up? he that *made* us, will *assuredly* take *care* of us. We may *safely* give up our selves, our trust, our all to him, who hath given us our selves, and our all. This * relation the Apostle makes the ground of trust. Is he not our Redeemer? will he part with his blood for us, and yet deny us bread? Is he not our *x* Father? are we not his Children? And shall he not provide for his own Children? 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. Hath the great God put such a *Phylostorgy* or natural affection into the *Bear, Pellican, Dolphin, Lioness, Eagle*, towards their young, and shall not he much more carry his own upon *Eagles* wings? *Exod.* 19. 4. Is he not our King, Head, and Husband? in a word, all those relations wherein we stand to God, or God to us are stable grounds of our trust upon him, and strong engagements of his assistance to, and Providence over us. Thus much for the Fourth general: the Fifth followeth.

* Isa. 40. 28.

* 1 Pet. 4. 19.

x Isa. 63. 16.

V. *What are those special and signal Seasons, which call aloud for the exerting of this Divine trust.*

This Holy Duty is indeed never out of season; So much the Original word *y* עת for time imports. True indeed our Saviour saith, and saith truly, *My time*, i. e. my time of discovering my self to be a Wonder-working God, *is not* k *yet come.* Yea, but all time, in respect of trust in God, is an appointed, yea, and an accepted time. The Wise man tells us, There is an appointed *l* time for every purpose under Heaven. A time to kill and to heal, to plant and to pluck up, to weep and to laugh, to get and to lose, to be born and to die. In all these trust in God is, not like Snow in harvest uncomely, but seasonable, yea necessary. There may be indeed a time when God will not be found, but no time where-

Sol.

y עתה *Tempestive eloqui.*

k Joh. 7. 6. 2, 4.

l Eccl. 3. 1, &c.

in

in he muſt not be truſted. *Nullum tempus occurrit Regi*, ſaith the Law: Let me add, *Nec Fiduciæ*, and 'tis ſound Divinity. The time of truſting in God cannot be laps'd; But more expreſly, There are ſome ſpecial Inſtances and nicks of time for Truſt.

1. *The time of proſperity*: when we ſit under the warm Beams of a Meridian Sun; when we waſh our ſteps in Butter, and our feet in Oyl: when the Candle of the Lord ſhines on our Tabernacle: when our mountain is made ſtrong: Now, now is a time for truſt, but not in our mountain, (for it is a mountain of Ice, and may ſoon diſſolve) but in our God. *Halcyon days* to ſome, are temptations to ſecurity, but to Saints times for truſt: to Carnal perſons Lures and Duckoys to Pride, but to Believers, ſeaſons for dependance. Now it is, that a Saint owns God as the Author, not chance or his own wit and induſtry; and implores his God to be the Preſerver and Bleſſer of his enjoyments. When our Ciſtern is full, our truſt muſt be not in it, but the (*m*) Fountain. At our fulleſt Tables, we muſt acknowledg, that as bread is the (*n*) ſtaff of our lives, ſo that ſtaff cannot ſupport, unleſs held in Gods Hand. Gods bleſſing is the only ſtay of that ſtaff of bread. Man lives not by bread alone, indeed not ſo much by bread, as by the (*o*) word of Bleſſing that proceeds out of Gods mouth.

m Cant. 4. 15.
n Iſa. 3. 1.
o Mat. 4. 4.

2. *The time of adverſity*. This alſo is a ſeaſonable time for truſt; when we have no bread to eat, but that of carefulneſs: nor wine to drink, but that of affliction and aſtoniſhment: no nor water neither, but that of our own Tears. Now is a time, not for over-grieving, murmuring, ſinking, deſponding, deſpairing, but for truſting.

In a Tempeſt, then a Believer thinks it ſeaſonable to caſt Anchor upward. Thus did good *p*) *Jehoſhaphat*. O our God, we know not what to do, only our eyes are unto thee. David, *What time I am* (*q*) *afraid, I will truſt in thee*. Times of trouble are proper times for truſt, be the trouble either ſpiritual or temporal.

p 2 Chron. 20. 12.
q Pſal. 56. 3.

1. *Spiritual trouble:* Doth the child of light walk in darkneſs? in ſuch midnight darkneſs, that he hath no light? now is a time to (*r*) *truſt in the Name of the Lord, and to ſtay himſelf upon his God*. Doth God take *Job* by the neck, and ſhake him even to pieces? Doth he ſet him up for his mark, and ſhoot ſuch arrows into his Soul, that the poyſon of them drinks up his ſpirits; why now, when God is killing, yea, though he (*z*) kills, *Job* will truſt. His Faith lives in the midſt of death. Is a godly *Heman* ſo ſcar'd with the terrours of God, that he is even (*a*) diſtracted; though he be at his wits end, yet not at his faiths end. *Heman* will pray and truſt, and hope even now, in this his day of ſpiritual trouble.

r Iſa 50. 10.
z Job 13. 15.
a Pſal. 88. 13. 15.

2. *Temporal:* Is it an evil time? A time of perſonal diſtreſs and viſitation? A time of wants or weakneſs? doth the Barrel of meal begin to fail, and the Cruſe of Oil ſink? *Is there no fruit in the Vine? doth the labour of the Olive fail? are the flocks cut off from the fold? and are there no Herds in the ſtall? Now, now is a time for* Habakkuk *to believe, believing to* (b) *truſt, and truſting to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of his Salvation.*

Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9.
b Hab 3. 16, 18

Throw a *Jonah* over-board into the raging Sea, bury him alive in the Whales Belly, *let the floods compass him about, and all Gods Billows pass over him, yet even then* Jonah *remembers God, and with the eye of his trust dares look towards his Holy Temple*, Jon. 2. 1, to 9. Let holy *Paul* have the sentence of death upon him, yet he will trust, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9, 10. and so will *David, though he walk in the very valley of the shadow of death*, Psal. 23. 4. Be the trouble what it will be, Faith knows what to do, *viz.* to fly by the wings of trust, to him that is the Hope of *Israel*, and his Saviour in the time of trouble, *Jer.* 14. 8. *Isa.* 33. 2. Trust in God in a sad condition, as a Believers *Alexipharmacum præstantissimum*, his choicest Medicine, Preservative, Antidote against faintings, swoonings, sinking. 'Tis like that *Corneum Indorum poculum*, which *Philostrates* speaks of, *lib.* 3. *c.* 1. *viz.* A Goblet out of which the *Indian* Princes drank, and then lookt on themselves as secure from the assaults either of fire, sword, or poyson.

VI. And lastly, *How Faith or Trust exerts, puts forth, demeans and bestirs it self in these signal seasons.* Psal. 37. 39.

I. *In times of Fulness and Prosperity.* When it goes well with us and ours; when the Candle of the Lord shines on us, and our Tabernacle; when our lines fall in pleasant places, and our God makes us to lie down in green and fat pastures; when we are as the wings of a Dove, covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold, when with *Judah*, we wash our garments in wine, and our clothes in the blood of grapes. Now, now is a fair opportunity for Faith or Trust to exert it self, yea and to appear gloriously. And indeed it requires no less than the utmost of Faiths skill, to steer the Soul handsomly in this serene and smooth-faced *Calm*. And so,

First, Faith or trust looks upward, and there fixeth its Eye on God, and on the things of God.

1. *On God:* and so Holy Faith delivers her self, in such Effata as these, *viz.*

1. *How full soever my large Cistern be, It is the Lord, and the Lord alone that is the grand Fountain, or rather Ocean of all my enjoyments.* All my
a Psal. 87. 7. *a* Springs are in him. All my streams are from him. Faith freely and humbly acknowledges, that all outward as well as inward blessings, that
b Jam. 1. 17. every *good and perfect gift is from* b *above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.* Every good Gift; not only those transcendents of Grace and Glory, of union with Christ here, and full fruition of Christ hereafter; but also all temporal good things, be they more or less, even to an Hoof, or Shoo-latchet. Faith confesseth that it hath nothing, but what
c 1 Cor. 4. 7. it *c* received from God. As God in mercy hath *d* promised; so God in
d Mat. 6. 33. 1 Tim. 4. 8. bounty hath given me these earthly enjoyments. It is the Lord that gave, saith believing *e* Job; *Riches, Honour, Advancement, promotion, they all*
e Job 1. 21. *come of God*; *Not from the East, nor West, nor South*, i. e. *neither this way, nor that way, nor any way of man, but God putteth down one, and*
f Psal. 75. 6, 7 f *setteth up another.* Faith knows, that as all good things come from God, so all success in business, all blessings on our Labours, Callings,

Affairs,

Affairs, is only from the Lord. It is the *g* Lord alone that makes whatſoever *Joſeph* doth to proſper. The Diſciples may fiſh and tug all night, but till *h* Chriſt comes, they can catch nothing. 'Tis the *i* bleſſing of the Lord alone that maketh rich.

g Gen. 39. 23.
h Mat. 4. 19.
i Prov. 10. 22.

2. *Since all that I have is received of God, I may not, I muſt not boaſt, crack,* k *glory, as if I received it not.* Let others, ſaith Faith, thank their own labours, wiſdom, policy, parts, *wickedly ſacrifice to their own* l *nets, and burn Incenſe to their own drags*, as if by them their portion were fat, and their meat plenteous. Faith leaves it to the *Atheiſt* to bleſs himſelf in being *Fortunæ ſux Faber*; or with that Dunghil-wretch, who being excited to thank God for a rich crop of Corn, replys, *Thank God ſhall I?* Nay, rather thank my Dung-cart; Faith is of another kind of complexion. O far be it, ſaith ſhe, that I ſhould ſo much as in my heart ſay, that my *m* power, and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.

k 1 Cor. 4. 7.
l Hab. 1. 16.
m Deut. 8. 17, 18.

3. *In as much as all that I have is from Gods bleſſing and bounty, this whole, all ſhall be for his praiſe and Glory.* Since all my enjoyments are of him, it is but juſt that all ſhould be to *n* him. He that is the *Alpha*, the beginning of all my mercies, ſhall be the * *Omega*, the end and Center of all my Services. Theſe Earthly treaſures, ſaith Faith, ſhall be improved for high and Heavenly ends. Not thrown into the ſink of a voluptuous panch; not ſo much on an Hawk or Hound, but laid, and lockt up in Gods Treaſury, *i. e.* the backs and boſoms of Chriſts poor members. Faith is reſolved to improve Satans greateſt weapon (*i. e.* the World and its ſweeteſt enjoyments) againſt himſelf, 'twill break his Hairy ſcalp with his own cudgels, turn his own Cannons againſt him, that is, by reducing all its worldly enjoyments into a ſerviceableneſs and ſubordination for the glory of God. Faith diſdains to take that coarſe way, of curing the luſt of the Eyes, by plucking them out, and to ſlake the thirſt of Riches by a profuſe caſting of it into the Sea; to conquer the Worlds honour and applauſe, by turning *Hermit*, and hiding of its head in a lonely Cave. No, Faith prepares the Soul for a Nobler way of Victory, not by ſlighting the Bait, but by digeſting of it into Food; by uſing of Creature comforts, as ſo many rounds in *Jacob*'s Ladder, to Mount it ſelf and others the nearer Heaven. Faith conſiders that the King of Heaven expects his Toll, Tribute, Cuſtom, out of all our Receipts, that where much is given, there more is *o* required: and juſtly fears, leſt if it ſhould not pay its God the Intereſt, it ſhould, and that juſtly forfeit and loſe the Principal. Therefore the more 'tis *p* dung'd and dreſt, and pruned, the more abundant cluſters it brings forth, and ſuch as are acceptable to the palate of the Vine-dreſſer.

n Rom. 11. 36.
* *Diis te meliorem quod genis, imperas. Hinc omne principium huc refer exitum.* Horat.
o Luk. 12. 48.
p Iſa. 5. 2. &c.

4. *Becauſe all my enjoyments proceed from Gods free-Gift, or rather his Loan, therefore they muſt and ſhall be readily ſurrendred to Gods Call.* If God will continue theſe outward comforts, ſaith Faith, I will own and improve his bounty; and yet if he thinks fit to call in his debts, I will revere, and ſubmit to his Soveraignty. Let God give, and give abundantly, *Job* will bleſs. Let God take, *Job* knows he takes but his own, and

on-

q Job 1. 21. on that account will bleſs him then. *Job* has learnt to bleſs a *q* taking, as well as a giving God. Here are Lands, Houſes, Children, Parents, dear enjoyments indeed; but yet ſuch as are not my Fee-ſimple, ſaith
r Luk. 14. 33. Faith, I am only a Tenant at will. *r* All theſe, yea and much more, nay, Life and all muſt and ſhall be denyed, reſigned, when God calls for them. A gracious heart knows that he cannot poſſibly make ſo much of his worldly enjoyments any other way, as by offering them up for Chriſts ſake, and reſigning them to Chriſts Call. *Mary*'s oyntment could never have been carried to a better market, than it was when poured ſo freely on her dear Saviours head. Be a believers enjoyments what they will, never ſo great, never ſo precious, ſuppoſe his veſſel laden with Pearls, yet
ſ 1 Tim. 1. 19. even theſe ſhall over-board, rather than hazard the *ſ* wrack of Faith, or a good Conſcience.

5. *Now I enjoy moſt from God, now even now 'tis neceſſary that I ſhould truſt moſtly, yea, wholly and only in God.* Thus *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 Chron. 20. 12. Thus *Aſa*, though he had an Army almoſt innumerable, no leſs
t 2 Chron. 14. 8, 11. than *t* five hundred and fourſcore thouſand men, all of them mighty men of Valour, yet he looks on all of them as Cyphers, as nothing without a God; and therefore now puts forth his truſt in God, and flys to him for help. Here indeed was a Noble truſt. 'Tis difficult to truſt God in our greateſt wants, but more difficult to truſt him in our greateſt
u Job 13. 15. Weal. 'Twas a brave act of Truſt in *u Job*, when he reſolves to truſt in God, though he killed him. An high attainment in *Paul*, when he had nothing, to be as one that poſſeſſed all things. Yea, but when God quickens, when we are full and abound, when our Cup runs over, now to truſt in a God and not in our Cup; when our Sails are fill'd with a Trade-wind, then to confide only in our *Pilot*; when we have all things, and yet then to look on the Creature as utterly inſufficient, and to lean wholly on Gods All-ſufficiency: This ſpeaks the moſt ſpiritual and refined Truſt, and yet this is that which Faith exerts in its fulleſt enjoyments. Where mercy abounds, Truſt ſuper-abounds, reputing the Creature as nothing at all, and eſteeming God as All in All.

6. *Theſe outward enjoyments are indeed ſweet, but my God the Author of them, is infinitely more ſweet.* They have all, even the moſt *defæcate* of them, a Tang and Smack of the Cask and Chanel through which they come. *At, at, Dulcius ex ipſo Fonte* ——A Single God is infinitely more ſweet than the enjoyment of all Created Good things that come from him. Though indeed, I can ſmile, when my Corn and Wine, and Oyl encreaſeth, and bear a part with my Valleys, when they ſtand ſo thick with Corn, that they even laugh and ſing. Alas, this without the enjoyment of a God, is but a meer *Riſus ſardonius*, the leaping of the Head after the Soul is gone. True indeed, theſe are ſome of Gods Love-Tokens: But what are theſe to his Per-
x Pſal. 4. 6. ſon and Preſence? Theſe indeed are rich Cabinets, but Oh the *x* Light of his Countenance! That, that's the Jewel. In having theſe I can ſay
y Gen. 33. 9, 11 with *Eſau*, I have *y* רַב Much; but give me him, I can exult, and Tri-

Triumphing ſay with *Jacob*, I have לכ All. Theſe are ſome of his Left-hand favours, ſome of his Bottles of Milk, and gifts, a fit portion for *Iſhmael* and the Sons of *Keturah*: But 'tis an *Iſaac*'s Inheritance, waters of the upper fountains my Soul thirſts after; thoſe Right-hand bleſſings, His z preſence, His Soul-raviſhing preſence, in which there is *fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.* Theſe may ſerve for my comfortable paſſage, but nothing but Himſelf can content and ſatisfie for my All-ſufficient *a* Portion. According to that, *Pſal.* 36. 8. He alone can fill up all the gaping chinks and chaſms of my Soul. He is my *Sun and Shield*, Pſal. 84. 11. My *Root and Branch*, Iſa. 11. 10. My Foundation and *Corner-ſtone*, Iſa. 28. 16. My *Sword and Shield*, Deut. 33. 29. He only can anſwer all my deſires, all my neceſſities. *Deus meus, & omnia*, my God and my all. Thus Faith fixes its aſpect on God.

z Pſal. 16. 11

a Pſal. 73. 26.

2. *On the things of God:* And ſo Faith concludes, *I have y higher and nobler projects, deſigns of deeper concernment then to ſit down*, ingulph and pleaſe my ſelf in theſe poor, earthly, droſſy, * dirty things here below. I have many Corruptions within, theſe are to be mortified; many Temptations without, theſe are to be reſiſted; many ſweet motions and whiſpers of the Spirit, theſe are to be cheriſhed; many weak graces, theſe are to be ſtrengthned; many perſonal, relational duties, theſe are to be performed: in a word, an effectual Calling and Election to be made ſure, this above all is to be regarded. Faith diſcovers a World beyond the Moon, and Trades thither: Leaving the men of the earth to load themſelves with clay and coals; Faith purſues its ſtaple commodity, and traffiques for grace and glory. Thus z *David*, when he had branded the worldling for diſquieting himſelf in vain, for heaping up riches, and knowing not who ſhall gather them; with an holy diſdain turns his back upon the World, as not worth his thoughts, ſaying, *and now Lord what wait I for? q. d.* It is true, I have Riches, and Honour, a Crown, a Kingdom? But is this the portion I could be content to ſit down with? *No, no, My hope is in thee, Deliver me from all my tranſgreſſions*, Ver. 8. Let them that love the world enjoy it, but Lord, pay not my portion in ſuch adulterate coyn, but in pardon of ſin, and peace of Conſcience; this, this is that I wait for. Thus * *Luther* having a rich Preſent ſent him, profeſſed with an holy boldneſs to God, *That ſuch things ſhould not ſerve his turn.* He was not taken with Pebbles, his nobler Soul flew *a* higher, and was fixt on Pearls. It is Gods favour that the Subjects of the King of Heaven deſire, rather then his preferment; like him that preferr'd *Alexander*'s kiſs before a great ſum of money given by *Alexander* to another. Thus Faith looks upward on God, and the things of God, and acts accordingly.

y *Altiora ſapio*

* *Excelſa piæmentis generoſitas ſupra omnem rerum humanarum ſpeciem erecta.*

z Pſal. 39. 6, 7.

* *Valde proteſtatus ſum, &c.*

a *Aquila non capit muſcas.*

2. *Faith or truſt looks downward on its fulleſt and ſweeteſt Temporal enjoyments.* And ſo,

1. *It acurately weighs theſe enjoyments in the Balance of the Sanctuary, and ſo makes a juſt eſtimate of them as to their worth and value.* Faith knows that generally men look at the things which are ſeen, and therefore

fore the things that ſeem beſt, that glitter moſt, are the beſt delights of moſt of the children of men, the deſire of their eyes, the joy of their hearts: Theſe they over-rate, and not only eſteem them highly, but adore them ſuperſtitiouſly, as a God, or their chiefeſt good. But now Faith brings theſe to the touch ſtone and ſtandard, and there interprets them as they are, according to their juſt value, finds them to be but the delights of ſenſe *fortunæ ludibria*, the ſports of nature, the trials of humane folly, at the beſt but helps of humane frailty. Particularly, Faith paſſes a twofold judgment on them, Negative and Poſitive.

1. Negative, And ſo Faith concludes,

1. *Theſe, and all ſuch like earthly enjoyments, never yet of themſelves benefited any man for heaven.* True, ſome things are ſo good in themſelves, that he that hath them cannot but be good, and the better for them: Such as are the Grace of God to us, and the Graces of the Spirit in us. Theſe find us evil, but make us good: But no man was ever made good meerly by riches and worldly wealth. Theſe indeed have found ſome really good, and made them leſs good than they were; and have found many ſeemingly good, whom they have made ſtark naught. How often hath a fat preferment ſpoil'd a good Preacher, and cauſed him, with him, when the fiſh is caught, to lay aſide his Net? Uſually the more we have of this World, the leſs we mind the World to come. Our place in *Paris* makes us forget our portion in *Paradice*. That earth which we tread under our feet, gets up into our hearts, and makes them more earthly than the earth we tread on.

2. *This high mountain, on whoſe top I ſtand, adds not a Cubit to my ſtature in Gods eyes.* God values not, as men do, by the rate or Subſidy-book. Not many Wiſe, not many Noble, not many Rich; but God hath choſen the *b* poor of this world rich in Faith.

b Jam. 2. 15

3. Therefore my true bleſſedneſs doth not, cannot conſiſt in the fulleſt confluence of theſe worldly enjoyments. I may not, I dare not with that rich *c* fool ſing a *requiem* to my ſoul, and bid it take its eaſe, for it hath goods laid up for many years. *Here is not my reſt.* Faith, like the *Turtle*, finds no reſt for the ſole of its foot even in a deluge of creature comforts. Suppoſe a Believers *d* Sons *as plants grown up in their youth*, and his Daughters *as corner-ſtones poliſht after the ſimilitude of a Palace*; ſuppoſe his *garners full affording all manner of ſtore*, his Oxen ſtrong to labour, and his *ſheep bringing forth thouſands, and ten thouſands in the ſtreets*: though the blear-eyed world ſhould pronounce him *e* happy, that is in ſuch a caſe; how would the Believer immediately reply with the *Pſalmiſts Epanorthoſis*, (or, in expreſs contradiction rather to ſo groſs a miſtake) *yea, bleſſed are the people*, they rather, or they only are *bleſſed which have the Lord for their God.* Thus Faith concludes Negatively.

c Luk. 12, 19

d Pſal. 144. 12, 13.

e Verſ. 15,

2. Poſitively, That Divine Leſſon which *Solomon*, the wiſeſt of meer men had by ſuch difficult and coſtly experiments at length learnt, Faith hath got by heart, and in the face of the world concludes with him:

f Vanity

f *Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.* The assertion is repeated, as in *Pharaohs* dream, to shew its certainty; and the term of Vanity doubled, to manifest the transcendency and multiplicity of this Vanity. There is a fivefold Vanity, which Faith discovers in all its Creature-enjoyments, *viz.* in that they are, f Eccles. 1. 2.

1. *Unprofitable.* Thus the Preacher, *What* g *profit hath a man of all his labour which he hath taken under the Sun?* What profit? Why, *he hath filled his hands with Air, he hath laboured for the Wind.* Eccl. 5. 16. Just so much, and no more, than *Septimius Severus* got, who having run through various and great imployments, openly aknowledges, *Omnia fui, sed nihil profuit.* Creature-comforts are not bread, *Isa.* 55. 2, 3. They profit no more than the dream of a full meal doth an hungry man, or that Feast which the h *Magician* made the *German* Nobles, who thought they fared very deliciously, but when they departed, found themselves hungry. In a day of wrath, sickness, death, can riches profit? *Prov.* 11. 4. *Ezek.* 7. 19. Just as much as a bag of gold hung about the neck of a drowning man. g Eccles. 1. 3. h *Corn. a Lap.* Comment. in Isa. 55. 2.

2. *Hurtful and pernicious. Solomon* observed that *Riches were kept for the owners thereof to their* i *hurt.* Hence it is that k *Agur* prays against them, *Give me no riches, lest I be full and deny thee*; as if abundance made way for *Atheism*, in those that know not how to manage it. *Maximilian* the Second was sensible of this, who refused to hoard up a mass of Treasure, fearing lest by falling in love therewith, of a soveraign Lord, he should become a servant to the *Mammon* of unrighteousness. Now the hurtfulness of Creature-comforts shews it self in several particulars. i Eccles. 5. 13. k Prov. 30. 8, 9.

1. *Faith knows that they are apt to puff up and swell the heart with the Tympany of pride.* Hence that great *Caution*, Deut. 8. 10, to the end. The usual attendants on riches are Pride and Confidence. Hence *Paul* to l *Timothy, Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded.* How apt are men to be lifted up with the things of this lower World? Riches at once sink the mind downward in covetous cares, and lift it upward in proud conceits. To see a man rich in purse, and poor in spirit, is a great rarity. l 1 Tim. 6. 17.

2. *Faith knows, that great enjoyments are great snares and powerful temptations to many other lusts*, such as are Covetousness, Lust, Luxury, Security, *&c.* The plenty of places oft occasion much wickedness in persons. Rich *Sodom* was a nursery of all impiety. *Jesurun*, when he waxeth fat, is apt to kick, *Deut.* 32. 15. And when *Israel* is fed to the full, m then she commits abomination. m Ezek. 16. 39, 50.

3. *Faith is sensible how apt temporal comforts are to make us sleight spiritual graces, and heavenly Communion.*

1. *Spiritual graces.* Our digging for silver and searching for gold, makes us too too apt to neglect that which is better than thousands of gold and silver, even durable substance. The radiant splendor of these things here below, dazzles our eyes to those things above. Whiles *Martha* is much * cumbred about many things, she forgets to act *Maries* part * Luk. 10. 41.

part, and to purſue that one thing neceſſary. How often do outward comforts entangle the ſpirits, weaken the graces, ſtrengthen the corruptions, even of good men! There was a ſerious truth in that Atheiſtical ſcorn of *Julian*, who when he ſpoiled the Chriſtians of their outward eſtates, told them, *He did it to make them more ready for the Kingdom of Heaven.* Many really godly loſe much in ſpirituals, by gaining much in temporls; they have been impoveriſh'd by their riches. They are indeed rich in Grace, whoſe Graces are not hindred by their riches, whoſe ſouls proſper when their bodies proſper. To ſee the daughter of *Tyre* n Pſal. 45. 12. come with her gift, to ſee the *n* rich among the people, intreat Chriſts favour, and give up themſelves to him; This indeed is a rare ſight. To be rich or great in the World, is a great temptation. When we flouriſh in the fleſh, we are apt to wither in the ſpirit. The ſcorching Sun-beams of proſperity too too often cauſe a drouth, and then a dearth, a famine in the ſoul, and make us throw off thoſe robes of righteouſneſs which the wind of affliction makes us to gird on the faſter. The World is of an incroaching nature, hard it is to enjoy it, and not come into bondage to it. Let *Abraham* caſt but a little more than ordinary reſpect on *Hagar*, and it will not be long ere ſhe begin to conteſt with, yea, crow over her Miſtreſs.

2. *Spiritual Communion with God.* Worldly comforts are always dog'd with worldly buſineſs, and this too often eats up our time for *Communion* with God. It is a very difficult thing to make our way into the preſence of God, through the throng of worldly incumbrances. Worldly imployments and injoyments are exceeding apt not only to blunt, but to turn the edg of our affections from an holy commerce with God. Faith knows what a Task, what an *Herculean* labour it is, after it hath paſt a day amidſt worldly profits, and been entertained with the delights and pleaſures a full eſtate affords, how to bring a whole heart to God, when at night it returns into his preſence. The World in this caſe doth by the Saint, as the little child by the mother; if it cannot keep the mother from going out, it will cry after to go with her. If the World cannot keep us from going to Religious duties, it will cry to be taken along with us, and much ado there is to part it and our affections. Thus Faith diſcovers the danger and hurtfulneſs of Creature-injoyments. But more than this,

4. Faith knows that theſe outward things are periſhing as well as unprofitable and hurtful. Mutable, inconſtant, fading * Vanities, Bubbles, Pictures drawn in Icy Tablets, graſs growing on the tops of houſes. Faith hath ſeen and heard the Providence of God ring the changes of mens Eſtates all the world over. Now exalted and lifted up, within a while depreſt and caſt down. Now honourable, eft-ſoon abaſed; the rich becoming poor, *Naomi* becoming *Mara*, Hills levelled into Valleys, and great Mountains becoming Plains. That Spoke of the wheel which is now aloft, o Pſal. 30. 6, 7. (*as the Captive King told his Conqueror*) is quickly turn'd to the ground and brought low. The beſt earthly eſtate, is in it ſelf a tottering eſtate. No *o* mountain ſo ſtrong but may ſoon be moved. What we call ſubſtance,

* *Fælicitas umbratilis.*

Summis negatum eſt ſtare diu.

Faith

Faith knows is but a ſhadow, and hath no continuance. There is no aſſurance in any earthly inheritance. How ſoon doth God ſequeſter it from us, or us from it. Theſe externals cannot be held with all our care, nor kept with all our policy and power. The beſt of earthly excellencies may ſoon be taken from us. *Jobs* p Crown quickly falls off from *Jobs* head. Not only is all fleſh graſs, but all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field, *Iſa.* 48. 6. Not only is man of a brittle Conſtitution in nature, but all the perfections which he hath, be they either Moral or Civil accompliſhments, on this ſide Grace, are brittle too. Reaſon, Scripture, experience abundantly atteſt this Truth. *The* q *faſhion of this world*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *paſſeth away*: As faſhions in the world alter and change every day, ſo doth the faſhion of this World. Creature-comforts are not ſo properly poſſeſſions as r Pageants, which whilſt they pleaſe us, paſs away from us in a moment. Thoſe we have here are running banquets, delicate, and ſerved in with ſtate, but ſoon over.

p Job 19. 9.

q 1 Cor. 7. 30

r *Quod miraris pompa eſt. Oſtenduntur iſtæ res, non poſſidentur & dum placent tranſeunt*, Sen. Epiſt. 110.

5. Faith makes yet a farther diſcovery, and finds that theſe Creature-comforts are falſe, deceitful, lying Vanities. Which appears,

2. *In the report they make of themſelves, and of their own worth.* If you look upon the bill of the Creature, it puts down not only an hundred for fifty, but a million for a mite. Like the Title-pages of ſome empty Pamphlets, more in them than in the whole book.

1. *In the promiſes which they make to us.* It promiſes that in the injoyment thereof we ſhall be happy, whereas we are both poor and miſerable in the fulleſt poſſeſſion of the Creature, unleſs God himſelf be our portion. It promiſes to eaſe us of our cares, yet it doth but multiply them; like drink to a dropſy-man, ſo far from ſlaking, that it inflames the thirſt. Riches are not food, but fuel to our deſires; and are ſo far from ſatisfying, that they but widen the throat. They do not allay our appetite as bread doth, when received and digeſted, but inflame it, as oyl doth, when caſt into the fire. It promiſeth to protect us, but performs no more than the great Tree doth from a ſoaking and laſting ſtorm. It promiſes to continue with us; though Father and Mother forſake, yet it will not, whereas it uſually proves like *Abſoloms* Mule, then apt to go from under us, when we moſt need it. Thus the Creatures are deceitful, *i.e.* They are objectively deceitful; through the deceitfulneſs of our hearts and luſts, we are deceived about them, if not by them. They fruſtrate our expectation, when our hopes of advantage by them are at the higheſt: ſeldom or never make good to the injoyer, what they promiſed to the expectant. Like *Jonah*'s Gourd, when moſt needed, then they wither; Like *Heſters* invitation of *Haman* to a banquet with the King, which fill'd his bladder with windy hopes, but ſoon after ended in his Ruine.

6. And laſtly, Faith knows that Creature-comforts are *ſ* unſatisfying Vanities. This the *Philoſopher* ſaw by the dim eye of Nature, concluding, that the world being Orbicular, of a round figure, could never fill up the corners of an heart, which is Triangular. The Creature were a God to us, if it could do this to us: Kindle thirſtings it may, but quench none:

ſ Iſa. 55. 2.

none: Can beget a thouſand fears and cares, but quiet none: Here *the* * Eccleſ. 1. 8. *eye is not* * *ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the ear with hearing.* The Soul ſtill crying out, *Give, give.* It is God alone ſatisfies, *Pſal.* 36. 8, 9. It is only a God in Chriſt that can give the Soul reſt, *Matt.* 11. 29. God would not reſt from his works of Creation, till man was formed. Man cannot reſt from his longing deſires till God be enjoyed; and then, and not till Pſal. 116. 7. then can an holy *David* ſing a *Lullaby* to his ſoul. † *Return unto thy reſt O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* Faith having thus expreſt her judgment concerning the true nature and worth of Creature-comforts, concludes her work in three reſolves.

1. *In the midſt of theſe my enjoyments, I muſt take heed that my heart ſits looſe from them.* Theſe handſome Pictures muſt be only hang'd on the wall, not glued to it. Though riches increaſe, I may not, muſt not ſet my heart on them. Thus the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. 62. 10. Uſe them I may, love them I may not, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, 16. My affections may perchance pitch, but muſt not fix on theſe things below, *Col.* 3. 2. Look upon them I muſt ‖ 1 Cor. 7. 31. with an holy indifferency, and uſe them as if I uſed them not, ‖ poſſeſs them as if I poſſeſſed them not. The Zeal of my Spirit muſt be for Heaven and Heavenly things. My ſoul muſt preſs hard only after God, as *David* did, *Pſal.* 63. 1, 8.

2. *Though I have all theſe comforts, yet I may not, muſt not, inordinately, immoderately, earneſtly delight and rejoyce in them.* Thus the Apoſtle enjoyns, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. It remains, that both they that have wives be as if they had none, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not, and they that uſe this world as not abuſing it. As we are apt to under-go, to do too little in heavenly things, ſo we are apt to overdo, or to do too much in worldly things.

Our two great failings, *viz.* That we do but make uſe as it were of thoſe things we ſhould enjoy, and that we enjoy thoſe things we ſhould only make uſe of. Oh, the Divine Art of holy moderation in the uſe of our ſweeteſt worldly enjoyments, is known and practiſed by few.

3. And laſtly, *As I may not over-love them, nor inordinately delight in them, ſaith Faith, ſo leaſt of all may I put the leaſt truſt or confidence in them.* I muſt not in the leaſt lean upon them. Not ſay to Gold, to fine Gold, *Thou art my confidence*, Job 21. 24. *i. e.* My ſoul may not ſecurely reſt and rely on gold, or golden enjoyments, as if theſe could ſtand by me, when all friends fail; as if theſe would not ſee us want any thing, nor ſuffer us to be wronged as long as they laſt, which God knows, is but for a moment. All theſe enjoyments can neither make me better, nor wiſer, nor render my life more ſafe and comfortable, nor ſanctifie our ſouls, nor ſatisfie our deſires: Therefore ſaith Faith, I will truſt in God only, whom I can never truſt too much; not in the Creature, which I can never truſt too little.

II. *In times of ſadneſs, afflictions, wants, ſufferings, miſeries*; when the hand of the Lord is gone out againſt us, and he greatly multiplies our ſorrows,

ſorrows, when he breaks us with breach upon breach, and runs upon us like a Giant, when his Arrows ſtick faſt in us, and his hand preſſeth us ſore, when he ſows Sackcloath on our skin, and defiles our horn in the duſt, when we are fain to eat aſhes like bread, and to mingle our drink with weeping. Now, now is a time for a Saints truſt to beſtir it ſelf to purpoſe. In this ſtorm and tempeſt, wherein the waves mount up to heaven, and go down again to the depths, Faith ſits at Helm, and preſerves the Soul from ſhipwrack. Faith takes this Serpent by the tail, handles it, and turns it into an harmleſs wand, yea, into an *Aarons* rod, budding with glory and immortality: Faith encounters this ſeeming *Goliah* of Affliction, grapples with it, not as a match, but as a vanquiſht underling. Let miſery dreſs her ſelf like the cruelleſt fury, come forth guarded with all her diſmal attendants, ſighs, groans, tears, wants, woes; Faith ſets its foot on the neck of this Queen of fears, inſults and triumphs over her. When the heart and fleſh are apt to fail, when Soul and Spirit are apt to ſink and ſwoon away, faith draws forth its bottle, and adminiſters a reviving Cordial. In a word, in a Sea, an Ocean, a Deluge of trouble, amidſt all ſtorms, winds, tempeſts, yea, an *Herrricane* of ſorrows and miſeries, Faith knows where, and how to caſt Anchor. According to that of our Saviour, μὴ * ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν καρδία. *Let not your heart be troubled,* ſo troubled, as a ſhip toſt in a Tempeſt: *ye believe in God, believe alſo in me.* Faith is that great Antidote, Cordial, *Panacea, Catholikon*, Heal-all of all Diſeaſes: This is that that makes a believer live in the midſt of Death. But more particularly in this tempeſtuous Condition, Faith doth theſe three things,

* *Ne perturbetur, commoveatur.*

1. *It warily avoids ſome dangerous Rocks and Quick-ſands.*
2. *It heedfully looks to its bottom in which it ſails.*
3. *It acurately obſerves its Compaſs by which it Steers.*

I. *There are ſome Rocks, Shelves, Quick-ſands, like Scylla* and *Charybdis*, againſt which in ſuch a dark Condition, the Soul is apt to ſplit it ſelf. *Theſe Faith avoids with utmoſt Care*; they are ſix.

1. *Diſtracting, diſtruſtful, carking, corroding, heart dividing, heart-ſtabing Cares.* Faith, according to the Apoſtles *o* command, μηδὲν μεριμνᾶτε, is carkingly careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and ſupplication makes its requeſts known to God. True indeed, a Believer is not, may not, dares not be ſlothfully, negligently careleſs of his Body, Eſtate, Relations, Affairs, particular Calling, *Romans* 12. 17. Faith knows, that he that endeavours not by honeſt, prudent, diligent, care, and fore-ſight, to *p* provide for his own, is worſe than an infidel. And yet Faith is far from all carking Cares, ſuch as diſtract the head, and *q* divide the heart from other and better things. *Faith takes no thought for its life, what it ſhall eat, neither for the Body, wherewith it ſhall be cloathed.* Faith leaves that to God, *who feeds the Sparrows, and cloathes the Lillies.* 'Tis for Gentiles and Unbelievers to cry out ſolicitouſly, *What ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or wherewithal ſhall we be cloathed?* My Heavenly Father knows that I have need of all theſe things. It belongs to him to provide. 'Tis his work, I leave it with him. All that

o Phil. 4. 6.

p 1 Tim. 5. 8.

q Mat. 6. 25, &c.

r Care

r 1 Pet. 5. 7. r Care, I caſt upon him, he doth and will care for me, I may not, muſt
ſ Pſal. 78. 19, 20. not, ſaith Faith, ſpeak againſt God, as did the ſ *Iſraelites*, ſaying, *Can God furniſh a table in the Wilderneſs?* As he hath given waters, can he give bread alſo, can he provide fleſh for his people?

2. *Carnal Counſel, uſing unlawful and Carnal Confidence, truſting in Lawful means.* Say not when God purſues, t *Aſſur ſhall ſave you, and you will ride on horſes.* In ſickneſs Faith will not run firſt to the
t Hoſ. 14. 3.
u 2 Cron. 6. 12. Phyſitian. That was Good u *Aſa*'s great ſin. 'Twas holy *Davids* great failing, to ſay (though but in his Heart), *Nothing better for*
x 1 Sam. 27. 1. *me than to eſcape into the Land of the* x *Philiſtines.* Alas poor *David!* to what a ſhift art thou now driven? what, to the uncircumciſed *Philiſtines?* Is it becauſe there is not a God in *Iſrael?* Oh, thou wilt quickly find this ſtarting-hole, to be only a going out of Gods Bleſſing, into a warm Sun. To think by ſinning to avoid ſuffering, is by ſaving the finger, to make way for a ſtab at the heart. To purſue and obtain Deliverance by unlawful ways, is to fiſh with, and loſe an hook of gold, and only to catch a *Gudgeon*; to preſerve the Body, but to deſtroy the Soul.

3. *Stinting and limiting the Holy one of Iſrael, to this or that particular means, way, time and manner of deliverance:* So as to ſay, if God help not this way, nothing will do. If not now, never. Faith remembers,
x Pſal. 78. 41. this was the *Iſraelites* God-provoking Sin. They x *limited the holy one of Iſrael.* Thus *Naaman*, 2 Kings 5. 11, *Behold*, ſaith he, *I thought he will ſurely come out, and ſtand, and call, and ſtrike*, and no other way will ſerve him. He thought thus, and thus; but the man was no leſs Blind, than Leprous. He was at once both proud and vain in his imaginations, and he ſhall know that the Almighty will not ſail by his narrow compaſs, nor dance, as I may ſo ſay, after his *Pipe*. God hath more ways to the wood than one, and always more than many out of it, though we at preſent ſee them not. God hath Extraordinary means to bear up, when Ordinary ones fail. God can turn Poyſons into Antidotes; Hindrances into Furtherances; Deſtructions themſelves into Deliverances. Has
y 1 King. 14. 6. *Elijah* no meat? Rather than fail, the devouring y Ravens ſhall be his
z Jon. 2. 10. Caterers. Is *Jonah* in danger of Drowning? Rather than ſink, a z Whale ſhall have commiſſion to be both his ſhip and Pilot too, to ſet him ſafe on ſhore. Faith knows that an Almighty God can work with, yea and without, above, contrary to means, and doth on purpoſe many times ſtain the pride and glory of ſome means that ſeem moſt probable, that we may obſerve and adore his wiſe Providence in finding out, and bleſſing the uſe of others more unlikely; that we may prefer his *Jordan* before our *Abanah*.

4. *Impatient fretting, murmuring, and quarrelling againſt Gods Diſpenſations.* This was poor *Jonah*'s great ſtumble. Peeviſh man! *Doeſt thou well to be angry*, and that with thy God? *yea*, ſaith he, *to the very death*, Jon. 4. 9. The moſt fooliſh anſwer that ever dropt from the mouth of an Holy man. Humble *Aaron* was better inſtructed. He knew it was no ſafe kicking againſt the pricks. That nothing was to be got

got by ſtriking again, by repining againſt God, but more blows. And therefore when God had killed both his ſons at a blow, He humbly *holds his* a *peace:* his heart and tongue were both ſilent. True indeed, we may not be ſenſeleſs and ſtupid under ſufferings. Had all the *Martyrs* had the *Dead Palſie*, before they went to the ſtake, their ſufferings had been far leſs Glorious. But yet, though we may not be ſtupid or *Stoical*, we muſt be patient and ſubmiſſive. Though we may not be like the *Caſpian Sea*, that neither ebbs, nor flows; yet we muſt take heed of being like ſwelling, roaring waves and billows. Though Gods Turtles may through infirmity flutter, yet they may not be like Bulls, when caught in a net, raving. *I was* c *dumb*, ſaith *David, becauſe thou didſt it.* Away then with thoſe ſurly looks, that do as it were enter a proteſt againſt what we ſuffer; nay more, beware of thoſe murmuring eccho's and replies of Spirit within, againſt God, who though they ſeem to yield and run, yet, with the flying *Parthian*, ſhoot their Arrows backward in diſcontent againſt God.

a Lev. 10. 2, 3.

c Pſal. 39. 9.

5. *All ſinful and ungrounded Doubting of Gods love, in and under ſufferings.* How Gods heart inclines, cannot infallibly be gathered from Gods Hand. Faith many times diſcovers Love in Gods Heart, when it ſees nothing but frowns on Gods forehead: and knows, that frequently when his tongue chides, His d Bowels yearn. *Is Ephraim a dear ſon? is he a pleaſant child?* Is he? *Alas no*, Rather he is a pettiſh, untoward, undutiful child. True, but yet a child, and therefore, *ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, my Bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy upon him.* Yea more, Faith is ſo far from arguing, that God has thrown his Love out of his Heart, when he takes his Rod into his Hand, that it rather from thence argues the quite contrary. I am now therefore beloved, becauſe chaſtiſed. *Whom I love, I rebuke and* e *chaſten.* Faith knows, that a Fathers Correction is ſo far from being an argument of wrath, that it is one of the cleareſt evidences of Love. Better far to be a chaſten'd ſon, than an undiſciplin'd Baſtard: No anger like that, *Iſa.* 1. 5, *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more:* and *Ezek.* 16. 42. I will be quiet, and *I will be no more angry. Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone*, Hoſ. 4. 17. Then is God moſt *f* angry of all, when he refuſeth to be angry.

d Jer. 31. 20.

e Rev. 3. 19. Amos 3. 2. Heb. 12. 6.

f *Tunc maximo iraſcitur, quando non iraſcitur. Super omnem iram miſeratio iſta,* Bern.

6. *Fainting, ſinking, deſponding, deſpairing under Gods Correction.* As Faith looks upon it as a great ſin to deſpiſe the Lords chaſtening, ſo it holds it for no ſmall infirmity, to faint, when corrected by him, *Heb.* 12. 6. This was that for which *David* ſo roundly chid, and rated his Soul, *why art thou caſt down, O my Soul? why art thou ſo diſquieted within me? Truſt thou in God Pſal.* 42. 11. *If thou faint in the day of Adverſity, thy ſtrength is but ſmall*, Prov. 24. 10. It argues thee to be a man of a ſhort, narrow, puſillanimous, poor, low Soul, to faint and ſink in ſuch a day. Thus we have ſhewn you the Rocks, the Dangerous Rocks, which Faith warily avoids.

II. *Faith heedfully looks to its Ship, or Bottom, in which it ſails.* Wherein ſhe

ſhe views the Keel, Ballaſt, Sails; takes care that theſe be right, and in good condition.

1. *The Keel, Bulk, or Body of the Ship, in which Faith ſails, and that is holy Contentation.* This was the Grand and Higheſt Leſſon
* Phil. 4. 11. that ever a believing *Paul* learnt, and practiſed, *viz.* * *In every ſtate therewith to be content.* What ſome obſerve of that earthly Angel, that glory of her Sex, the Lady *Jane Gray*, That ſhe made miſery it ſelf ſeem amiable, and that the night-cloaths of Adverſity did as much become her, as her day-dreſſing; is much more true of Holy Contentation, It renders every condition, even the Blackeſt, lovely. An afflicted Chriſtian, *if contented*, may Truly ſay with the *Spouſe*, Cant. 1. 5, *Though I am black, I am comely.* Faith therefore mainly looks to this, and profeſſes, that though ſhe cannot be ſatisfied with the whole World for her portion, yet ſhe muſt, will be, and is contented with the leaſt pittance of it for her paſſage. Has an *Agur* Food? what though Courſe
g לחם חקי ordinary Commons? *Prov.* 30. 8. yet 'tis Food: Has *John Baptiſt*
h Matt. 3. 4. Raiment; what though of h *Camels Hair?* yet 'tis Raiment: And ſo long Faith looks upon her ſelf, as obliged to be therewith content, 1 *Tim.* 6. 8.

2. *The ballaſt that poiſes the Ship, and that's Humility.* This is that that keeps the Soul ſteady, and makes it ride out the Storm. Pride is that which ſwells the heart: Now when a member is ſwollen, though it grows bigger, yet it grows weaker, and ſo the more unfit and unable to bear any burthen laid upon it. 'Twas Humility that ſteel'd *Athanaſius* againſt all his adverſaries and ſufferings, in that he was, as *Nazianzen* reports him, as truly low in heart, as really high in worth. The Hum-
i Gen. 32. 10. ble Soul judges it ſelf i *leſs than the leaſt of mercies*, juſtly obnoxious to the greateſt Judgments, and therefore no wonder if it can patiently want or undergo any thing.

3. *The Sails whereby this well-ballaſted Ship is carried, and that is Heavenly-mindedneſs.* This indeed is Faith's *Top* and *Top gallant*, whereby it ſails with a full forewind into its Port and Haven. Faith minds, favours, ſets its affection on things above, not on things below, *Col.* 3. 2. Its heart is, where its treaſure is, in Heaven. Faith knows, that a mixture of earth and droſs much weakens the Soul, and makes it unable to ſuffer; whereas a Soul quickened with heavenly mindedneſs, that flyes high, and looks beyond the Stars, concludes that a little, a very little of the dreggy creature will ſerve turn to paſs it through this worldly Pilgrimage, and this greatly enables for ſuffering; and thus Faith heedfully looks to her bottom.

III. *Faith acurately obſerves its Compaſs by which it ſteers.* Now there are ſeveral points in Faiths Compaſs, or if you will, there are ſeveral choice Maxims or Axioms of Faith, by which a Believer ſails in and through the Blackeſt ſtorms and Tempeſts. Such as theſe,

I. *Whatever the ſtone be that's thrown, 'tis the hand of Heaven flings it.* In all the evils we either fear or feel, faith looks beyond the Creature, and carries up the heart unto God. No evil in the City, no penal evil, either

either on me or mine, *but the* k *Lord hath done it.* Thus *David*, Dumb, *becauſe thou didſt it*, Pſal. 39. 9. and *the Lord ſhall bid Shimei curſe*, 2 Sam. 16. 10. *David* could read Gods hand at the foot of the Commiſſion, though his Commanders could not. Thou couldeſt have no power againſt me, *unleſs* l *given thee from above*, ſaith our Saviour to *Pilate*. And holy *Job* when plundred of all, ſaith not, The Lord gave, and the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* have taken away; the Lord enricht, but Satan hath rob'd me: No, but as if they all had been but Cyphers, and meer ſtanders by, *The Lord gave, and the Lord only, or at leaſt chiefly, hath taken*, Job 1. 21.

k Amos 3. 9.

l Joh. 19. 11.

II. *Let the King of Heaven do his worſt, yet even then, he can do no wrong.* This is a grand Maxim in the Rolls of Eternity. One of the Fundamental Laws of Heaven; and that becauſe,

1. *God is the moſt Soveraign God, the Supreme Lord*, that knows no Law but his own Will, which is the higheſt and the moſt unerring rule of Righteouſneſs, Gods hand is Gods only rule, and therefore whatever Line he draws, it muſt needs be right. Our God is a Law to himſelf, who only can write on his Imperial Edicts and proceedings, *ſtat pro ratione voluntas*. God doth and may juſtly do whatſoever pleaſeth him, *Dan.* 4. 35. and can moſt juſtly reſolve the Reaſon of all his Actions into his own Will: that great Potter may do with his clay what he pleaſeth, and that without the leaſt controul or contradiction, *Rom.* 9 20, 21. On this account, Faith counts it wiſdom, not to play the cenſorious Critick on Gods adminiſtrations, conſidering that he alone is Ἀνεύθυνος καὶ ἀνυπεύθυνος. According to that of *Elihu*, Job 33. 12, 13, *God is greater than man, why doſt thou ſtrive againſt him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?*

2. *God as he is moſt juſt in himſelf, ſo alſo he acts moſt juſtly to me*, ſaith a *believer*. Faith juſtifies God in all his proceedings, *i. e.* ſubſcribes and gives Teſtimony to the Righteouſneſs of God, even in his ſharpeſt Corrections. Thus *David*, I know O Lord, *that thy Judgments are* m *right*. Thus the Church, when under the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, (the heaviſt Judgment ever inflicted on any people) yet then humbly ſets her ſeal to Gods Juſtice, *The Lord is* n *Righteous, for I have rebelled againſt him.*

m Pſal. 119. 75

n Lam. 5 18. Neh. 9. 33.

III. *'Tis not fit that poor, weak, ſhort-ſighted, ſinful creatures, ſhould be their own Carvers.* If they ſhould, they would, like raſh Children, cut either too much, or too little, or their own fingers. Well for us, that as our o Times, ſo our Conditions are not in our own, but in Gods hands. Not what I pleaſe, ſaith Faith, but what my God pleaſeth. He knows beſt what's good for his people; and I know, had God granted my requeſts, and fulfilled my deſires, I had long ſince been undone. The cooling drink which I ſo paſſionately deſired in my burning *Paroxyſm*, would have added to my flame, and quickly diſpatcht me to the houſe of darkneſs. Hence it was, that the honeſt Shepherd, being askt, *What weather it ſhould be to day*, replied, *even what weather I pleaſe*. Not ſo, ſaith the other, *but what pleaſeth God.* Yea ſo, replys the Shepherd, *for whatever pleaſeth God, ſhall be ſure to pleaſe me.*

o Pſal. 31. 15.

IV. *Better to want outward Comforts, than enjoy them without my Fathers good will.* *Iſrael* had been better to have been without *Quails*. They had ſower ſawce to their ſweet meat; while the Fleſh was in their mouths, the *p* Plague of God was in their noſtrils. You will needs have this, and that, and t'other thing, why, Take it, ſaith God, but then take my Curſe with it too: The Sack, but poyſon with it. You ſhall have it, but in wrath, See 1 *Sam.* 8. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12. *Hoſ.* 13. 11. *Rachel*, you will have Children, or elſe you will take pet and *q* die. You ſhall have Children, a *Benjamin* to your *Joſeph*, which yet ſhall prove a *Benoni*. His *Intrat* will prove your *Exit*! his life your death, *Gen.* 35. 18. Better were it for *David* to be without *Michal*, than that ſhe ſhould, being enjoy'd, *become a* r *ſnare*.

p Numb. 11. 20

q Gen. 30. 1.

r 1 Sam. 18. 21.

V. *Seem it never ſo ill, yet it is really well.* On theſe two accounts,

1. *It cannot but be well with him, with whom God is.* 'Twas not ill with the three Children, though in a fiery Furnace, ſo long as God was there, *Dan.* 3. 25. Suppoſe *David* walking in *s* the Suburbs of death and danger, yet not ill with him, becauſe God was with him. When God ſays, *I will be with you*, as he has, *Iſa.* 43. 2. and I feel him, ſaith Faith, it is infinitely more to me, than if he ſhould ſay, peace, health, credit, honour, plenty, ſhall be with thee. *God being with me, is all theſe, and infinitely more.* In theſe I could have but a particular good. In a ſingle God I have all good. Now God, who is with his people at all times, is moſt with them, and moſt ſweetly with them in the * worſt times. As their afflictions increaſe without, ſo do their conſolations within, 2 *Cor.* 1. 5. when the child is moſt ſick, then it is moſt dandled on the mothers knee: when it begins to faint, then is the Cloſet ranſackt for the choiceſt Cordial. This bleſſed *Baynham* found, when at the Stake he told the bloody *Papiſts*, O ye *Papiſts*, ſaid he, you talk of Miracles, behold here a true one, *Theſe flames are to me a bed of Roſes.* God is wont to give Believers in ſuch a time, their exceedings, their five meſſes. That part of the Army which is upon action in the field, and upon hard ſervice, ſhall be ſure to have their pay. What are all the promiſes, but veſſels of Cordial Wine, tunn'd on purpoſe againſt a groaning hour, when God uſually and ſpeedily broacheth them, *Pſal.* 50. 15.

s Pſal. 23. 4.

* *Domitianus in Fovis ſinu.* Sueton.

2. *All is well that ends well.* Now, ſaith Faith, all ſad and gloomy diſpenſations have ſweet ends, whether I reſpect God or my ſelf.

I. *In reſpect of God:* And that,

1. *For the manifeſtation of his infinite Wiſdom.* Who ſo contrives the paſſages of his Providence, as that one ſhall qualifie another. God knows, that ſhould I always proſper, I ſhould have been apt to ſwell and preſume, and therefore he pricks my bladder, to let out that wind. Had I been always fed with ſweet meats, 'tis very probable I might have ſurfeited, and therefore he mingles my ſweets with theſe tart ingredients. Were not this Baſe added to my Treble, I ſhould never have made any *Harmonious* Muſick.

2. *For the declaration of his Almighty Power.* God many times brings his people into ſuch a condition as not to know what to do, that *they*

may

may know now what the Lord can do. Thus, *Deut.* 32. 36, 39, *The Lord ſhall judg his people, when he ſees their power is gone:* and ſee now, *That I, even I am he, and there is no God with me.* Thus, *Pſal.* 106. 8, *Nevertheleſs he ſaved them for his name ſake:* but what Name? even that Glorious one of his Power, *that he might make his Power known.*

II. *In reſpect of Believers.* The life of every Saint is a *Traga-Comedy*, and the laſt Act of it crowns the whole *Play.* Mark the upright man, and behold the juſt; for *the* t *End of that man is peace.* Out of the Eater ſhall come meat. This affliction and that affliction, yea the whole ſeries of them *ſhall work together for my good*, Rom. 8. 28. *Saints Good is Gods aim.* As love is the principle he conſtantly acts from, ſo the Saints good is the end he propounds and aims at in all his diſpenſations. From this he never ſwerves. The fire of love never goes out of his Heart, nor the Saints good out of his Eye. When he frowns, chides, ſtrikes, yet then his heart burns with love, and his thoughts are to do them good, *Jer.* 24. 5.—and 29. 11. *Deut.* 8. 2, 16. But what good? Much every way, chiefly with reſpect to their Corruptions, graces, ſervices, glory. t Pſal. 37. 37.

1. *Saints Corruptions to purge and ſubdue them. This is all the fruit, the taking away of their ſin*, Iſa. 27. 9. Afflictions are Gods brine and pickle to preſerve the Saints from putrifying. *Pauls* thorn in the fleſh was given him to prevent and mortifie Pride, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. All the harm which the fiery Furnace, did the young men in *Dan.* 3. 24. 25. was but to burn off their cords. Our luſts are cords, cords of vanity, fiery tryals ſent on purpoſe to burn and conſume them. Adverſity like Winter-weather, is of great uſe to kill weeds and vermin, which the Summer of proſperity is wont to breed. God is fain to rub hard many times to fetch out the dirt that is ingrain'd in our Nature. This Thunder ſerves to clear the Air from infectious Vapours. This bitter portion purges out ill humours. Be the Teeth of thy troubles never ſo many, never ſo ſharp, 'tis but to file off thy Ruſt. This tempeſtuous toſſing in the Sea, will more purge the Wine from its Lees. It clarifies the Soul. According to that, *Zach.* 14. 9. *I will bring a third part through the fire, to refine them as ſilver.*

2. *Saints Graces.* And that,

1. *For their Tryal and experience. That the trial of your Faith*, &c. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. The fire trys the Gold as well as the Touch-ſtone. Diſeaſes not only need, but try the art of the *Phyſician*, and Tempeſts the skill of the *Pilot.* The Saints ſufferings are but as ſo many Touch-ſtones. Now, now ſhall the Saint clearly know, whether the Conſcience be ſound or foundred, if it will pace well in rough ways. Here, *here is the Faith*, i. e. *the Trial of the Saints Faith and patience*, Rev. 13. 10.

2. *For their Increaſe and Growth.* The ſnuffing of the Candle makes it burn the brighter. Hence it is that the Saints *glory in Tribulation*, Rom. 5. 5. becauſe their ſufferings add ſtrength to their Graces. Never are Gods ſpiritual Nightingales apt to ſing more ſweetly, than when the thorn is at their Breaſt. Saints are indeed made of precious metal, and yet they are too too apt to loſe their edg. Hence it is that God by afflictions whets and ſharpens them. He beats and bruiſes his Links, to make them burn the

brighter, loads his choiſeſt Ships with ſufficient *Ballaſt*, to make them ſail the ſteadier: bruiſes his Spices to make them ſend out an *Aromatick* Savour, *Jer.* 22. 21. *Iſa.* 26. 10. *Heb.* 12. 10.

Object. *But I find not this precious benefit.*

Sol. Afflictions do not preſently work, at leaſt thou mayſt not preſently feel their operation. As Chriſt to *Peter*, What I do, thou knoweſt not now, *Joh.* 13. 7, *but thou ſhalt hereafter*: So afterward it brings forth the fruit of Righteouſneſs, *Heb.* 12. 11.

3. *With reſpect to Saints future ſervices.* Great ſufferings are many times ſent to prepare Saints, for extraordinary Services. See it in *u Joſeph* and *Paul*; *Joſeph* thrown into a pit, ſold a ſlave into *Egypt*, there caſt into a priſon, by all fitted for a Palace, and to be a Nurſing Father to the Church. God beſtows more Chopping and Hewing on Corner-ſtones, becauſe he intends they ſhall not only ſupport, but adorn the Building. God means to build high upon them, therefore lays his foundations very low: Intends to ſell theſe Diamonds at an high rate, and thence it is he ſpends ſo much time and art in cutting them.

u Gen. 41. 40, 41.

4. *With reſpect to the furtherance of their future Glory.* Chriſt went from a Croſs to Paradice, ſo do Chriſtians. The Maſter was made *perfect through ſufferings*, Heb. 2. 10. So are Saints his ſervants. Though the Saints Croſs cannot merit, yet it makes way for a Crown of Life, *Jam.* 1. 12, *Their light afflictions which are but for a moment, occaſionally work for them a far more excellent and eternal weight of Glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

VI. *Be it really ill, never ſo ill, yet it might well be worſe.* Be the ſuffering what it will, yet whilſt here, whilſt above ground, 'tis far leſs than I have * deſerved. Bleſſed be God, cried out that * Man of God, when in the *Paroxiſm* of his Gout; This, though ſharp, is not Hell: the worſt that we can feel here is not the hundred thouſand part of what we have deſerved hereafter. *Every ſtep on this ſide Hell is mercy*, ſaith a ſenſible Believer. God is gracious in his greateſt ſeverity, remembers mercy in the midſt of Judgment. As 'tis ſaid of *Aſhur, his Shooes were Iron and Braſs, yet he dipt his foot in Oil*, Deut. 33. 24, 25. So God tempers his greateſt ſeverities with the Oyl of Mercy. Corrects but in meaſure, *Iſa.* 17. 6. nay in mercy, in infinite mercy. I that have deſerved the blow of an Executioners Axe, am ſent away only with a laſh of a Fathers Rod. God only lops off ſome luxuriant branches, when in Juſtice he might *cut up the Vine, both Root and Branch, and caſt them into Everlaſting flames.*

* Ezr. 9. 13. *Mr. *Whitaker.*

VII. And laſtly. *Be it now never ſo ill, it will certainly be* x *better.* Thus the Pſalmiſt, *All thy waves are gone over me, yet the Lord will command his loving kindneſs*, Pſal. 42. 7, 8. Thus the Church, *Mic.* 7. 7, 8, 9. More particularly Faith concludes:

x *Nemo deſperet meliora Lapſus Sen. Trag.*

1. *My afflictions, though Laſting, will not be Everlaſting.* Though the night be dark and long, yet there will come a day-break, and comfortable Dawn; my God will not always chide, *neither will he contend for ever*, Iſa. 57. 16. Rev. 2. 10.

2. *My greateſt extremity of diſtreſs, is Gods faireſt opportunity for Deliverance.* When the *Caſſians* are moſt infeſted with Locuſts, then and not till then

then do the *Soleucidian* Birds come in to their assistance. *Caus. Hier. l. 6. c. 31.* Now, *now will I arise saith the Lord*, Deut. 32. 36. *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moses. In the Mount there will God be seen*, Gen. 22. 14.

3. And lastly. * *Heaven will pay for all at last. Where every Tear shall be wiped off*, Rev. 21. 4. The pleasantness and security of the Port, will make more than full amends for the danger and difficulty of the passage. And this is that wherein Faith triumphs, as knowing that he that for Christs sake, in obedience to Christs Will, in conformity to Christs Word, in aiming at Christs Glory, wears the sharpest Crown of Thorns here, shall by Christ have his Temples incircled with the fairest Crown of Glory hereafter; as in this life an hundred fold, so in the *World to come*, *Life Eternal*, Mark 10. 30.

* *Superata Tellus Sydera donet.* Boet. *Fœlix post fata. Ad delicias juvat ire periclis.* Ἐκ πόνου κλέος.

How

How may we cure Diſtractions in holy Duties?

Matth. XV. 7, 8.

Ye Hypocrites, well did Iſaiah propheſie of you, ſaying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

IN this Chapter you will find a Conteſt between *Chriſt* and the *Phariſees*, about their Traditions and old Cuſtoms, which they valued above the Commandments of God; as it is uſual with formal men to love Chains of their own making, and to make Conſcience of a Tradition, when yet they can diſpenſe with a Commandment; and thereby diſcovering themſelves to be very hypocrites, who are more in Externals than in Internals, in ſhew than ſubſtance, minding the formality rather than the ſpirit and life of Service to God; our Lord confirms his cenſure by the teſtimony of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Ye Hypocrites*, &c.

I ſhall not ſtand explaining the words, [*Drawing nigh*] is a phraſe peculiar to Worſhip, eſpecially to Invocation: [*mouth* and *lips*] are put for all external Geſtures, and that bodily exerciſe which is neceſſary to the worſhip of God, eſpecially for words. [*But their heart is far from me*] it chiefly intendeth their habitual averſeneſs from God, but may alſo comprize the wandring and roving of the mind in duty, which is a degree and ſpice of it: of that I ſhall treat at this time, and my Note will be:

That diſtraction of thoughts, or the removing of the heart from God in Worſhip, is a great ſin, and degree of hypocriſie.

The Text ſpeaketh of groſs hypocriſie or a zealous pretence of outward Worſhip without any ſerious bent of heart towards God; but any removal of the heart from him in times neceſſary to think of him, is a degree of it; for though diſtractions in Worſhip are incident to the people of God, yet they are culpable, and do ſo far argue the relicks of hypocriſie in them. I ſhall ſhew,

1. The

1. The *greatneſs* of the ſin.
2. The *Cauſes*.
3. The *Remedies*.

Firſt, That there is ſuch a ſin, ſad experience witneſſeth, vain thoughts intrude importunately upon the ſoul in every duty, in hearing the Word we are not free, *Ezek.* 33. 31, nor in Singing, but chiefly they haunt us in Prayer, and of all kinds of prayer in mental Prayer, when our addreſſes to God are managed by thoughts alone, there we are more eaſily diſturbed, words bound the thoughts, and the inconvenience of an interruption is more ſenſible, as occaſioning a pauſe in our ſpeech; and as in mental Prayer, ſo when we joyn with others, to keep time and pace with the words, unleſs the Lord quicken them to an extraordinary livelineſs, we find it very hard: but how great a ſin this is, is my firſt task to ſhew. I ſhall do it,

1. By three *general* conſiderations.
2. By ſpeaking *particularly* to the preſent caſe.

Firſt, *Generally*.

1. Conſider how *tender God is of his Worſhip*, Lev. 10. 3. He hath ſaid, *That he will be ſanctified in all that draw nigh unto him*. To ſanctifie, is to ſet apart from common uſe. Now God will be ſanctified, that is, not treated with as an ordinary perſon, but with ſpecial heedfulneſs of ſoul and affection, becoming ſo great a Majeſty; when you think to put him off with any thing, you leſſen his excellency and greatneſs, and do not ſanctifie him, or glorifie him as God, and therefore God pleadeth his Majeſty when they would put a ſorry ſacrifice upon him, as if every thing were good enough for him, *Mal.* 1. 14, *Curſed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*. To be ſlight in his ſervice, argueth mean thoughts of God, *Eccl.* 5. 2, *Be not raſh with thy mouth, nor haſty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth*. We forget our diſtance, and by a bold prophaneneſs are too fellow-like and familiar with God, when we are not deeply ſerious and exact in what we do and ſay in his preſence, but only babble over a few impertinent words without attention and affection: Certainly, God is very ſenſible of the wrong and contempt we put upon him, for he noteth all, *Heb.* 4. 13. *All things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do*. And he will not put it up, for he telleth us, *Exod.* 20. 8, *That he will not hold them guiltleſs that take his name in vain*; and he will be as good as his word: For the leaſt diſorders in Worſhip have been ſorely puniſhed, witneſs the *ſtroke from Heaven* upon *Aarons Sons*, Lev. 10 2. The breach made upon *Uzzah*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 6. And the havock made of the *Bethſhemites*, 1 *Sam.* 6. 19. The diſeaſes that raged at *Corinth*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 30. And though judgments be not ſo rife and viſible now upon our unhallowed approaches to God, yet he ſmiteth us with deadneſs, where he doth not ſmite us with death; for a man is puniſhed otherwiſe than a boy, and judgments are now ſpiritual, which in the Infancy of the Church were temporal and bodily. Certainly,

ly, we have all cauſe to tremble when we come before the Lord.

2. *The more ſincere any one is, the more he maketh conſcience of his thoughts*; Is more obſervant of them, and more troubled about them, *Iſa.* 55. 7, *Let the unrighteous man forſake his thoughts*; then he beginneth to be ſerious, and to have a conſcience indeed when his thoughts trouble him. So *David*, Pſal. 119. 113, *I hate vain thoughts: but thy Law do I love.* We think thoughts are free and ſubject to no tribunal: if there be any error in them, we think it is a very venial one, they betray us to no ſhame in the world, and therefore we let them go without diſlike and remorſe: But a child of God cannot paſs over the matter ſo: he knoweth that thoughts are the immediate births of the ſoul, and do much diſcover the temper of it; that there actions begin, and if *vain thoughts* be ſuffered to lodg in him, he will ſoon fall into further miſchief, and therefore he conſidereth what he *thinketh*, as well as what he ſpeaketh and *doth*; and if at all times, eſpecially in Worſhip, where the workings of the inward man are of chief regard, and the acts of the outward only required, as a help to our *ſerving God in the Spirit*, Phil. 3. 3.

3. *Careleſneſs in Duties is the high way to Atheiſm*; For every formal and ſlight Prayer doth harden the heart, and make way for contempt of God; Men that have made bold with God in duty, and it ſucceeds well with them, their awe of God is leſſened, and the lively ſenſe of his Glory and Majeſty abated, till it be quite loſt; by degrees they outgrow all feelings and tenderneſs of conſcience; every time you come to God ſlightly, you loſe ground by coming, till at length you look upon Worſhip as a meer Cuſtom, or ſomething done for faſhions ſake.

Secondly, *Particularly*. 1. It is an affront to God, and a kind of mockery; we wrong his *Omniſciency*, as if he ſaw not the heart, and could not tell man his thought. It is Gods Eſſential glory in Worſhip to be acknowledged an *all-ſeeing Spirit*, and accordingly to be worſhipped in *ſpirit and in truth*, Joh. 4 24. Thoughts are as audible with him as words; therefore when you *prattle words*, and do not make conſcience of *thoughts*, you do not worſhip him *as a ſpirit* We wrong his Majeſty when we ſpeak to him in Prayer, and do not give heed to what we ſay; ſurely we are not to prattle like *Jays*, or *Parrots*, words without affection and feeling, or to chatter like *Cranes*, or be like *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet calls a *ſilly Dove without an heart*. A mean man taketh it ill when you have buſineſs to talk with him about, and your minds are elſewhere; you would all judg it to be an affront to the Majeſty of God if a man ſhould ſend his *clothes ſtuffed with ſtraw*, or a *Puppet* dreſſed up inſtead of himſelf, into the Aſſemblies of Gods people, and think this ſhould ſupply his perſonal preſence; yet our clothes ſtuffed with ſtraw, or an Image dreſſed up inſtead of us, ſuch * *Michal* put into *Davids* bed, would be leſs offenſive to God than our bodies without our Souls; the abſence of the ſpirit, is the abſence of the more noble part: We pretend to ſpeak to God, and do not hear our ſelves, nor can give any account of what we pray for; or rather let me give you *Chryſoſtom*'s Compariſon: A man would have been thought to have prophaned

* 1 Sam. 19. 12, 13.

ned the *myſteries of the Levitical Worſhip*, if inſtead of * *ſweet incenſe* he ſhould put into the Cenſer *Sulphur* or *Brimſtone*, or mingle the one with the other. Surely our Prayers ſhould *be ſet forth as Incenſe*, Pſal. 141. 2. And do not we affront God to his face, that mingle ſo many vain, ſinful, proud, filthy, blaſphemous thoughts? What is this but to mingle *Sulphur* with our *Incenſe?* Again, when God ſpeaketh to us, and knocks at the heart, and there is none within to hear him, is it not an affront to his Majeſty? Put it in a temporal Caſe; if a great perſon ſhould talk to us, and we ſhould neglect him, and entertain our ſelves with his ſervants, he would take it as a deſpight and contempt done to him. The Great God of Heaven and Earth doth often call you together to ſpeak to you; Now if you think ſo ſlightly of his ſpeeches as not to attend, but ſet your minds a driſt to be carried hither and thither with every wave, where is that reverence you owe to him?

* *Chryſ.* Hom. 74. in Mat.

It is a wrong to his goodneſs, and the comforts of his holy preſence: for in effect you ſay, that you do not find that ſweetneſs in God which you expect, and therefore are weary of his company before your buſineſs be over with him; it is ſaid of the *Iſraelites*, when they were going for *Canaan*, that in *their hearts they turned back again into Ægypt*, Acts 7. 39. They had more mind to be in *Ægypt* than under *Moſes* Government; and their thoughts ever ran upon the fleſh-pots and belly-chear they enjoyed there; we are offended with their impatience and murmurings, and the affronts they put upon their Guides, and do not we even the ſame and worſe in our careleſs manner of worſhipping? When God hath brought us into his preſence, we do in effect ſay, *Give us the world again*, this is better entertainment for our thoughts than God and holy things; if Chriſtians would but interpret their actions, they would be aſhamed of them; is any thing more worthy to be thought of than God? The *Iſraelites* hearts were upon *Ægypt* in the *Wilderneſs*, and our hearts are upon the World, nay, every toy, even when we are at the throne of Grace, and converſing with him who is the Center of our reſt, and the *fountain of our bleſſedneſs*.

2. It grieveth the Spirit of God: he is grieved with our vain thoughts as well as our ſcandalous actions; other ſins may ſhame us more, but theſe are a grief to the Spirit, becauſe they are conceived in the heart; which is his preſence-Chamber, and place of ſpecial reſidence; and he is moſt grieved with theſe vain thoughts which haunt us in the time of our ſpecial addreſſes to God, becauſe his peculiar operations are hindred, and the heart is ſet open to Gods adverſary in Gods preſence, and the World and Satan are ſuffered to interpoſe in the very time of the reign of Grace, than when it ſhall be *in ſolio*, in its royalty, commanding all our faculties to ſerve it; this is to *ſteal away the Soul from under Chriſts own arm*, as a Captain of a Gariſon is troubled, whom the enemies come to prey under the very walls, in the face of all his forces and ſtrength: So certainly it is a grief to the ſpirit when our luſts have power to diſturb us in holy duties, and the heart is taken up with unclean glances, and worldly thoughts, than when we preſent our ſelves before the Lord; God looks

upon his peoples ſins as aggravated, becauſe *committed in his own houſe*, Jer. 23. 11, *In my houſe I have found their wickedneſs*; What is this but
*Prov. 20. 8. to dare God to his very face? *Solomon* ſaith, * *A King ſitting upon his throne, ſcattereth away evil with his eyes.* They are bold men that dare break the Laws, when a Magiſtrate is upon the Throne, and actually exerciſing judgment againſt offenders; ſo it argueth much impudence, that when we come to deal with God, as *ſitting upon the Throne*, and obſerving and looking upon us, that we can yet lend our hearts to our luſts, and ſuffer every vain thought to divert us: There is more modeſty, though little of ſincerity in them that ſay to their luſts, as *Abraham* to
*Gen. 22. 5. his Servants, * *Tarry here while I go yonder and Worſhip*; or as they ſay, the Serpent layeth aſide her poiſon when ſhe goeth to drink: When a man goeth to God, he ſhould leave his luſts behind him, not for a while and with an intent to entertain them again, but for ever: However this argueth ſome reverence of God, and ſenſe of the weight of holy duties: but when we bring them along with us, it is a ſign we little mind the work we go about.

3. It is a ſpiritual diſeaſe: the ſoul hath its diſeaſes as well as the body; the unſteady roving of the mind, or the diſturbance of vain and impertinent thoughts, is one of thoſe diſeaſes, ſhall I call it a ſpiritual madneſs, or fever, or ſhaking-palſie, or all theſe? You know mad-men make ſeveral relations, and rove from one thing to another, and are gone off from a Sentence ere they have well begun it; our thoughts are as ſlippery and inconſiſtent as their ſpeeches, therefore what is this but the frenzy of the ſoul? What mad Creatures would we ſeem to be, if all our thoughts were patent, or an inviſible notary were lurking in our hearts to write them down? We run from Object to Object in a moment, and one thought looks like a meer ſtranger upon another; we wander and run through all the World in an inſtant; Oh, who can count the numberleſs operations and working of our mind in one duty! what impertinent Excurſions have we from things good, to lawful; from lawful to ſinful, from ordinarily ſinful, to down-right blaſphemous! Should any one of us, after he hath been ſome time exerciſed in duty, go aſide and write down his thoughts, and the many interlinings of his own prayers, he would ſtand amazed at the madneſs and light diſcurrency of his own Imaginations.

Or ſhall I call it the feveriſh diſtemper of their ſoul? *Ægri ſomnia* is a Proverb; in fevers men have a thouſand fancies and ſwimming toys in their dreams, and juſt ſo it is with our ſouls in Gods Worſhip: We bring that curſe upon us ſpiritually, which corporally God threatned to bring upon the *Jews*, *I will ſcatter you to the end of the earth.* We ſcatter our thoughts hither and thither without any conſiſtency; the heart in regard of this roving madneſs, is like a runnagate Servant, who when he hath left his Maſter, wandreth up and down, and knoweth not where to fix; or like thoſe that are full of diſtracting buſineſs, that cannot make a ſet meal, but take their diet by ſnatches.

4. It argueth the loſs and non-acceptance of our Prayers: you are in danger

danger to loſe your Worſhip, at leaſt ſo much of it as you do not attend upon; and truly to a man that knows the value of that kind of traffick, this is a very great loſs: You that are Tradeſmen are troubled if you happen to be abroad when a good Cuſtomer cometh to deal with you: the Ordinances of God are the Market for your ſouls; if you had not been abroad with *Eſau*, you might have received the bleſſing, and gone away richly loaden from a Prayer, from the Word, and the Lords Supper; but you loſe your advantages for want of attention. Allowed diſtractions turn your Prayers into ſin, and make them no Prayers; when the ſoul departeth from the body, it is no longer a Man but a Carkaſs: So when the thoughts are gone from Prayer, it is no longer a Prayer, the Eſſence of the Duty is wanting. What is Prayer? ἀνάβασις τοῦ νοῦ, as *Damaſcene* defined it, *The lifting up of the heart to God*; *Many* have prayed *without words*, but never *any* prayed *without lifting up*, or *pouring out the heart*. If a man ſhould kneel, and uſe a geſture of Worſhip, and fall aſleep, no doubt that man doth not pray: This is to ſleep with the heart, and the words uttered are but like a dream, have but a ſlight touch of reaſon in them, a meer drowſie unattentive devotion; the ſoul is aſleep though the eyes be not cloſed, and the ſenſes locked up. Can we expect that God ſhould hear us, and bleſs us, becauſe of our meer outward preſence? We are aſhamed of thoſe that ſleep at a duty, and this is as bad or worſe; they may ſleep out of natural infirmity, as weakneſs, age, ſickneſs, &c. But this doth more directly proceed from ſome ſlightneſs or irreverence: Well then, with what face can we expect the fruit of that Prayer to which we have not attended? It is a great preſumption to deſire God to hear thoſe requeſts, a great part whereof we have not heard our ſelves; if they be not worthy of our attention, they are far more unworthy of Gods. x *Cyprian*, or *Ruffinus*, or whoever was the Author of the Explication of the Lords Prayer in *Cyprians* Works, hath a notable paſſage to this purpoſe, *Quo modo te a Deo exaudiri poſtulas, cum te ipſe non audias? Vis Deum eſſe memorem tui cum rogas, cum ipſe tui memor non ſis?* Thou art unmindful of thy ſelf, thou doſt not hear thy ſelf, and how canſt thou with reaſon deſire the bleſſing and comfort of the duty which thou thoughteſt not worthy thine own attention and regard.

x *Cypr. de Orat. Domin.*

I would not willingly grate too hard upon a tender Conſcience: it is a queſtion that is often propounded, *Whether wandring thoughts do altogether fruſtrate a duty, and make it of none effect?* And whether *in ſome caſe a vertual attention doth not ſuffice?* There is an *actual intention*, and a *vertual intention*; The *actual intention* is when a ſoul doth *diſtinctly* and *conſtantly* regard every thing that is ſaid and done in a duty: And a *vertual intention* is, when we keep only a *diſpoſition* and *purpoſe* to attend, though many times we fail and are carried aſide; this *Aquinas* calleth *prioram intentionem*: out of the Scripture we may call it, *the ſetting of the heart to ſeek the Lord*, 1 Chron. 22. 19. Now, what ſhall we ſay in this Caſe? On the one ſide, we muſt not be too ſtrict, leſt we prejudice the comfort and expectation of Gods people; when did they ever mu-

nage a duty, but they are guilty of ſome wandrings? It is much to keep up our hearts to the main and ſolid requeſts that are made to God in Prayer. But on the other ſide, we muſt not be too remiſs, leſt we incourage indiligence and careleſs devotion: Briefly then, by way of anſwer, there is a threefold diſtraction in Prayer, *diſtractio invita, negligens, & voluntaria.*

1. There is *diſtractio invita*, an unwilling diſtraction, when the heart is ſeriouſly and ſolemnly ſet to ſeek God, and yet we are carried beſides our purpoſe; for it is impoſſible ſo to ſhut doors and windows, but that ſome wind will get in; So to guard the heart, as to be wholly free from vain thoughts, but they are not conſtant, frequent, allowed, but reſiſted, prayed againſt, ſtriven againſt, bewailed, and then they are not iniquities, but infirmities, which the Lord will pardon; he will gather up the broken parts of our Prayers, and in mercy give us an anſwer; I ſay, where this diſtraction is retracted with grief, reſiſted with care, as *Abraham drove away the fowls*, when they came to pitch upon his *Sacrifice*, Gen. 15. 11. It is to be reckoned among the infirmities of the Saints, which do not hinder their Conſolation.

2. There is *diſtractio negligens, a negligent diſtraction.* When a man hath an intention to pray, and expreſs his deſires to God; but he prays careleſly, and doth not guard his thoughts, ſo that ſometimes he wanders, and ſometimes recovers himſelf again, and then ſtrays again, and is in and out, off and on with God: as a *Spaniel* roveth up and down, and is ſtill croſſing the ways, ſometimes loſing the company he goes with, and then retiring to them again. I cannot ſay, this man prayeth not at all, or that God doth not hear him, but he will have little comfort in his Prayers; yea, if he be ſerious, they will miniſter more matter of grief to him than comfort; and therefore he ought to be more earneſt and ſedulous in reſiſting this infirmity, that he may be aſſured of audience: Otherwiſe, if his heart be not affected with it in time, by degrees, all thoſe motions and diſpoſitions of heart that are neceſſary to prayer, will be eaten out and loſt.

3. There is *diſtractio voluntaria, a voluntary diſtraction*; when men mind no more than the task or work wrought, and only go round in a track of accuſtomed duties, without conſidering with what heart they perform them; this is ſuch a *vanity of mind* as turneth the whole prayer *into ſin.*

Secondly, The cauſes of this roving and impertinent intruſion of vain thoughts.

1. *Satan* is one cauſe, who doth *Maxime inſidiari orationibus* (as *Caſſian* ſpeaketh) lye in wait to hinder the Prayers of the Saints: when-ever we *miniſter before the Lord*, he is at our *right-hand ready to reſiſt us*, Zech. 3. 1. And therefore the Apoſtle *James*, when he biddeth us *draw nigh to God*, biddeth us alſo to *reſiſt the devil*, James 4. 7, 8. Implying thereby, That there is no *drawing nigh* to God without *reſiſting Satan.* When a *Tale* is told, and you are going about the *affairs of the World*, he doth not trouble you; for theſe things do

do not trouble him, or do any prejudice to his Kingdom: But when you are going to God, and that in a *warm, lively affectionate manner*, he will be ſure to diſturb you, ſeeking to abate the *edge of your affections*, or *divert your minds*; Formal Prayers patter'd over, do him no harm; but when you ſeriouſly ſet your ſelves to call upon God, he ſaith within himſelf, This man will pray *for Gods Glory*, and then I am at a loſs; for the *coming of Chriſts Kingdom*, and then mine goeth to wrack; *That Gods Will may be done upon earth as it is in heaven*, and that minds me of my *old fall*, and my buſineſs is to croſs the Will of God; he will pray *for daily-bread*, and that ſtrengtheneth dependance; for *Pardon* and *Comfort*, and then I loſe ground, for the devils are the * *Rulers of the darkneſs of this World*; He will pray to be kept *from ſin* and *temptation*, and that is againſt me. Thus *Satan* is *afraid* of the Prayers of the Saints, he is concerned in *every requeſt* you make to God, and therefore he will *hinder* or *cheat* you of your Prayers; if you will needs be praying, he will carry away your hearts. Now, much he can do if you be not watchful, he can *preſent Objects* to the ſenſes which ſtir up thoughts, yea, purſue his *temptations*, and caſt in one *fiery dart* after another, therefore we had need ſtand upon our guard. * Epheſ. 6.12.

2. The *natural levity of our ſpirits:* man is a *reſtleſs creature*, we have much ado to ſtay our hearts for any ſpace of time in *one ſtate*, much more in *holy things*, from which we are *naturally averſe*, Rom. 7. 21, *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me* τὸ κακὸν παρακεῖται, Oh conſider this natural feebleneſs of mind, whereby we are unable to keep long to any imployment, but are *light, fethery*, toſſed up and down like a *dryed leaf* before the *wind*, or as an *empty veſſel* upon the waves; 'tis ſo with us in moſt buſineſſes, eſpecially in thoſe which are Sacred: the Apoſtle biddeth us *pray without ceaſing*, and we cannot do it whileſt we pray; he is a ſtranger to God and his own heart, who finds it not daily; this is an incurable vanity; though we often repent of it, yet 'tis not amended; a miſery that God would leave upon our natures, to humble us while we are in the World, and that we may long for Heaven; the Angels and bleſſed Spirits there, are not troubled with thoſe things: in Heaven there is no complaining of wandring thoughts, there God *is all in all*; they that are there, have but one Object to fill their underſtandings, one Object to give contentment to their deſires, their hearts cleave to God inſeparably by a perfect love; but here we are cumbred with much ſerving, and much work begets a multitude of thoughts in us, *Pſal.* 94. 11, *The Lord knows the thoughts of men that they are but vanity.* When we have ſummed up all the traverſes, reaſoninings, and diſcourſes of the mind, we may write at the bottom this, as the total ſum, *here is nothing but vauity.*

3. Another cauſe is *practical Atheiſm*; we have *little ſenſe* of things that are *unſeen*, and lie *within the vail*, in the *World of Spirits*; things that are *ſeen* have a *great force* upon us; *offer it now to the Governour*, ſaith the Prophet, *Mal.* 1. 8. God is a far off, both from our ſight and apprehen-

apprehenſion; ſenſes bind attention: If you ſpeak to a man, your thoughts are ſetled; and you think of nothing elſe: but in ſpeaking to God, you have not like attention, becauſe you ſee him not, *Exod.* 32. 1, *Make us gods to go before us:* Ay, that we would have a *viſible God*, whom we may ſee and hear: but the true God being a *Spirit*, and an *inviſible Power*, all the ſervice that we do him, is a *task* performed more out of cuſtom than affection, in a ſlight perfunctory way.

4. *Strong and unmortified luſts*, which being rooted in us, and having the Soul at moſt command, will trouble us, and diſtract us when we go about any duty; each man hath a mind, and can ſpend it unwearied as he is inclined, either to *Covetouſneſs*, *Ambition* or *Senſuality*: for *where the treaſure is, there will the heart be*, Mat. 6. 20. ſet but the *Covetous* man about the *World*, the *Voluptuous* man about his *pleaſures*, and the *Ambitious* man about his *honours* and *preferments*, and will they ſuffer their thoughts to be taken off? ſurely no; but ſet either of theſe about *holy things*, and preſently theſe luſts will be interpoſing, *Ezek.* 33. 31, *their heart goeth after their Covetouſneſs:* the ſins to which a man is moſt addicted, will *ingroſs the thought*; ſo that this is one ſign by which a man may know his reigning ſin, that which interrupts him moſt in holy duties: for when all other luſts are kept out, Satan will be ſure to ſet the darling ſin a work to plead for him; if a man be addicted to the World, ſo will his muſings be; if to mirth, and good chear, and vain ſports, his thoughts will be taken up about them: if to the inordinate love of Women, his fancy will be rolling upon carnal beauty, and he will be firing his heart with unclean thoughts.

5. Want of love to God and holy things; men are loth to come into Gods preſence for want of Faith, and to keep there for want of love; love fixeth the thoughts, and drieth up thoſe ſwimming toys and fancies that do diſtract us: we ponder and muſe upon that in which we delight: were our natural hatred of God and of the means of Grace, changed into a perfect love, we ſhould adhere to him without diſtraction: we ſee where men love ſtrongly, they are deaf and blind to all other objects; they can think and ſpeak of no other thing: but becauſe our love to God is weak, every vain occaſion carrieth away our minds from him: you find this by daily experience, when your affections flag in an Ordinance, your thoughts are ſoon ſcattered, wearineſs maketh way for wandering, our hearts are firſt gone, and then our minds; you complain you have not a ſetled mind, the fault is, you have not a ſetled love, for that would cauſe you to pauſe upon things without wearineſs, *Pſal.* 1. 2, *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate day and night.* Pſal. 119. 97, *O how I love thy Law, it is my meditation all the day. Davids* mind would never run upon the Word ſo much, if his heart were not there; thoughts are at the command and beck of love: where love biddeth them go, they go; and where love biddeth them tarry, they tarry: the Saints firſt delight, and then meditate.

6. Slightneſs and irreverence, or want of a ſenſe of Gods preſence: a careleſs ſpirit will ſurely wander; but one deeply affected, is fixed and intent:

tent: *Jonah* when he prayed in the Whales belly, could he have an heart to forget his work? *Daniel* when he prayed among the Lions, could he mind any thing elſe? when we are ſerious and pray in good earneſt, we will call in all our thoughts, and hold them under command. This Queſtion was put to *Baſil*, how a man ſhould keep the mind free from diſtraction: his Anſwer was, * γίγνεται ὁ μετεώρισμὸς ὑπὸ τῆς ἀργίας τῆ νῆ, καὶ ἐξ ἀπιστίας μὴ παρεῖναι τὸν Θεὸν ἐξετάζοντα καρδίας καὶ νέφρους. That is, that this evil came from ſlightneſs of heart, and unbelief of Gods preſence: *for if a man did believe that God were before his eyes, ſearching the heart, and trying the reins, he would be ſerious: all things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do*; God looketh on, and ſo do the Angels: he looketh on the heart, and will not you be ſerious? *Scholars* that have a trewantly mind, yet the preſence of their Maſters forceth them to their Books; the Great God who telleth man his thought, he ſeeth our deſires; and thoughts ſpeak louder in his ears than our words; therefore poſſeſs the heart with a *dread of his glorious preſence*, and with the weight and importance of the works we are about; were we to deal with man in a caſe of life and death, we would weigh our words, and not rove like mad-men. * Baſil *in Regulis brevioribus.*

7. The Curioſity of the Senſes theſe occaſion a diverſion: 'tis the Office of the fancy to preſent as in a Glaſs whatſoever is received by the External Senſes, or offered by the memory, and ſo the underſtanding taketh notice of it; the wandring eye cauſeth a wandring heart: *Solomon* ſaith, *Prov.* 17. 24, *The fools eyes are to the ends of the earth*: firſt his eyes rove, and then his heart: the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith of unclean perſons, *that they have eyes full of adultery*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. μοιχαλίδος, of the adultereſs (as the word ſignifieth) the eye is rolled upon the object, and then the dart by the fancy is tranſmitted to the heart: Senſes are the windows and doors of the Soul, keep the Senſes, if you would keep the heart. *Job* was at a ſevere appointment with his eyes, *Job* 31. 1. 'tis good when we go to God to renew theſe *Covenants*, to agree with the heart that we will not go to God without it; with the eyes and ears, that we will not ſee and hear any thing but what concerns our work; 'twas a ſtrange conſtancy and fixedneſs which * *Joſephus* ſpeaketh of, when *Fauſtus*, *Cornelius*, and *Furius*, and *Fabius*, with their Troops had broken into the City of *Jeruſalem*, and ſome fled one way, and ſome another, yet the Prieſts went on with their Sacrifices, and the holy rites of the Temple, as if they heard nothing: though they ruſhed on them with their ſwords, yet they preferred the duty of their Religion, before their own ſafety: and ſtrange is that other Inſtance of the *Spartan* Youth in *Plutarch*, that held the Cenſer to *Alexander* whilſt he was ſacrificing, and though a coal lighted upon his fleſh, he ſuffered it to burn there, rather than by any crying out he would diſturb the rites of their Heatheniſh Superſtition: Certainly theſe Inſtances ſhould ſhame us Chriſtians, that do not hold the Senſes under a more ſevere reſtraint, but upon every light occaſion ſuffer them to trouble and diſtract us in worſhip. * Joſephus *de Bellis Judæorum.*

8. *Carking and diſtruſtful Cares*, when we are torn in pieces with the cares

cares of the World, we cannot have a compoſed heart, but our minds will waver, and our dangers will recurr to our thoughts, and hinder the exerciſe of our Faith: God took ſpecial care of the *Jews*, when they went up to worſhip, that they might have nothing to trouble them: and therefore he ſaith, *Exod.* 34. 24, *None of the Nations ſhall deſire the Land when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year*; and * *Auguſtine* gives the reaſon of it, leſt they ſhould be diſtracted with thoughts about their own preſervation, *vult Deus intelligi ut ſecurus quiſque aſcenderet, nec de terrâ ſuâ ſollicitus eſſet, Deo promittente cuſtodiam*: and one of the arguments by which *Paul* commendeth ſingle life, is freedom from the incumbrances of the World, *that we may ſerve the Lord without diſtraction*, 1 Cor. 7. 35.

* Auguſtinus *queſt.* 161. *in Exod.*

Thirdly, *Remedies*: I might ſpeak many things by way of meer counſel about guarding the Senſes, the uſe and abuſe of a form, *&c.* but all theſe are but like external applications in Phyſick, or Topical Medicines, as the binding of things to the wriſts of the hands, *&c.* which work no perfect cure of a diſeaſe, unleſs the diſtemper be purged away: therefore I ſhall ſpeak to thoſe things that are moſt effectual.

1. *Go to God and wait for the power of his Grace*: *David* ſpeaking of it as his work, *Pſal.* 86. 11. *Unite my heart to the fear of thy name*, fix it, gather it together, ἕνωσον τὴν καρδίαν μου (ſaith the *Septuagint*) make it one: the heart is multiplied when 'tis diſtracted by ſeveral thoughts: God hath our hearts in his own hand, and when he can keep them up no longer, then he holds them up; when he withdraws his grace, we loſe our life and ſerioufneſs; as Meteors hang in the air as long as the heat of the Sun is great, but when the Sun is gone down, they fall; as long as the love of God and the work of his grace is powerful in us, we are kept in a lively heavenly frame; but as that abateth, the Soul ſwerveth and returneth to vanity and ſin. We read, *Act.* 16. 14, 15, that the *Lord opened the heart of Lydia, ſo that ſhe attended to the things that were ſpoken of Paul*: Attention there beareth ſomewhat a larger ſenſe than we now conſider it in, namely a deep regard to the doctrine of life; yet this ſenſe of fixedneſs of ſpirit cannot be excluded: go to God then, pray him to keep thy heart together: he that hath ſet bounds to the Sea, and can bind up the waves in a heap, and ſtop the Sun in its flight, certainly he can faſten and eſtabliſh thy heart, and keep it from running out.

2. *Meditate on the greatneſs of him before whom we are*; 'tis of great conſequence in duties, to conſider whom we take to be our party, with *whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13. In the Word, God is the party that ſpeaketh to us, *Thou ſhalt be as my mouth*, Jer. 15. 16. *As if God ſpake by us*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. 'Tis God ſpeaketh; and the heathen King of *Moab* ſhewed ſuch reverence, that when *Ehud* ſaid, *I have a meſſage to thee from God*; *he aroſe out of his ſeat*, Judg. 3. 20. So in Prayer you have to do with God, you do as really miniſter before him as the Angels that abide in his preſence. Oh, if you could ſee him that is inviſible, you would have more reverence. * A man that is praying or worſhipping, ſhould behave himſelf as if *he were in Heaven immediately before God*, in the midſt of

* *Omnino nos oportet orationis tempore curiam intrare cæleſtem.*

of all the bleſſed Angels, thoſe *ten thouſand times ten thouſand that ſtand before God*; Oh, with what reverence, with what fear ſhould a poor worm creep into his preſence! think then of that glorious all-ſeeing God, with whom thou canſt converſe in thoughts, as freely as with men in words; he knoweth all that is in thy heart, and ſeeth thee through and through; if you had ſpoken all thoſe things you have thoughts upon, you would be odious to men; if all the blaſphemy, uncleanneſs, worldly projects, were known to thoſe that joyn with us, ſhould we be able to hold up our heads for bluſhing? and doth not the Lord ſee all this? could we believe his inſpection of the heart, there would be a greater awe upon us.

Illam, utique curiam in quâ rex regum ſedit in ſtellato ſolio circumdante cum innumerabili & ineffabili beatorum ſpirituum exercitu, ubi & ipſe qui viderit, quia majorem numerum non invenit, millia ait millium miniſtrabant ei, & decies centena millium aſſiſtebant ei, quanta ergo cum reverentiâ, quanto timore, quanta illuc humilitate accedere debet è palude ſua procedens & repens ranuncula vilis, quam tremebundus, quam ſupplex, quam denique humilis & ſollicitus, & toto intentus animo majeſtati gloriæ in præſentia Angelorum, in conſilio juſtorum & congregatione aſſiſtere poterit vilis homuncio. Bernard. de quatuor modis orandi.

3. *Mortifie thoſe luſts that are apt to withdraw our minds:* he that indulgeth any one vile affection, will never be able to pray aright; every duty will give you experience what corruption to reſiſt, what thoughts we are haunted and peſtred with when we come to God: God requireth Prayer, that we may be weary of our luſts, and that the trouble that we find from them in holy exerciſes may exaſperate our Souls againſt them; we are angry with an importunate beggar that will not be ſatisfied with any reaſonable terms, but is always obtruding upon us: every experience in this kind ſhould give us an advantage to free our hearts from this diſturbance: the whole work of grace tendeth to Prayer; and the great Exerciſe and Imployment of the Spiritual life is, *watching unto Prayer*, Epheſ. 6. 18. and that Prayer be not interrupted, 1 *Pet.* 3. 2.

4. Before the duty, there muſt be an actual preparation, or a ſolemn diſcharge of all impediments, that we may not bring the World along with us; *Put off thy Shoes off thy feet*, ſaith God to *Moſes*, *for the place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy ground.* Surely we ſhould put off our carnal diſtractions when we go about holy duties. *Gird up the loins of your minds*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Peter*, 1 Pet. 1. 13. an alluſion to long garments worn in that Country; 'tis dangerous to come to Prayer with a looſe heart. *My heart is fixed* (ſaith *David*) *O God, my heart is fixed*, Pſal. 57. 7. that is, fitted, prepared, bended to Gods Worſhip; the Soul muſt be ſet, put into a dexterous ready poſture. *Claudatur contra adverſarium pectus, & ſoli Deo pateat, ne ad ſe hoſtem Dei accedere tempore orationis patiatur.* Cyp. *lib. De oratione Domini.* There muſt be a reſolved ſhutting of the heart againſt Gods enemy, leſt he inſinuate with us, and withdraw our minds.

5. *Be ſevere to your purpoſe*, and ſee that you regard nothing but what the Duty leadeth you unto: 'tis the Devils policy to cheat us of the preſent Duty by an unſeaſonable interpoſition. Satan beginneth with us in good things, that he may draw us to worſe; what is unſeaſonable is nought; watch againſt the firſt diverſion how plauſible ſoever, 'tis an intruding thought that

breaketh a rank; in this caſe ſay as the Spouſe, *Cant.* 3, *I charge you that you awake not my Beloved till he pleaſe*; ſuch a rigid ſeverity ſhould you uſe againſt the ſtarting of the heart; if Satan ſhould at firſt caſt in a thought of blaſphemy, that would make thee quake and ſhake, therefore he beginneth with plauſible thoughts; but be careful to obſerve the firſt ſtraglings; *yea, be not diverted by thy very ſtrivings againſt diverſions, and therefore do not diſpute with ſuggeſtions, but deſpiſe them; nor ſtand examining temptations, but reject them, as blind *Bartimeus* regarded not the rebukes of the People, but cryed the more after Chriſt; or as Travellers do not ſtand beating back the Dogs that bark at them, but hold on their courſe; this is to be religiouſly obſtinate and ſevere to our purpoſe: Satan contemned, hath the leſs advantage againſt you; when he is writing images upon the fancy, do not vouchſafe to look upon them: A Cryer in the Court that is often commanding ſilence, diſturbeth the Court more than they that make the noiſe; So diſputing with our diſtractions, increaſeth them; they better are avoided by a ſevere contempt.

* *Eſt præterea optimum ad attendendum remedium ſi imagines rerum irrutines non ſolum non advertas, non excutias, non examines, ſed ita te habeas quaſi eas non aſpicere digneris: nam ipſum advertere, & examinare iſtas cogitationes evagari eſt: & jam adverſarius aliquid à nobis extorſit, &c.* Jacobus Alvarez.

6. Bring with you to every holy Service ſtrong ſpiritual affections; our thoughts would not be at ſuch a diſtance from our work if our affections were more ready and more earneſtly ſet: it is the unwilling Servant that is loath to ſtay long at his work, but is ſoon gone; could we bring our ſelves more delightfully to converſe with God, our hearts would hold our minds cloſe, and we would not ſtraggle ſo often as we do; therefore ſee you do this, or you do nothing. *I was glad* (ſaith *David*) *when they ſaid unto me, come, let us go into the houſe of the Lord*, Pſal. 122. 1. Were we of this frame of ſpirit; many directions would not need. Now what ſhould hinder us from being thus affected? Are not the Ordinances of God the ſpecial means of our communion with him? And the throne of grace the very porch of Heaven? Can we be better than in Gods Company, pleading with him for our ſouls good, and waiting for his bleſſing? Therefore let us be glad, and rejoyce in his preſence, and you will not eaſily find ſuch out-ſtrayings of mind and thought.

7. *Remember the weight and conſequence of the Duties of Religion*, that is a cure for ſlightneſs; you are dealing with God in *a Caſe of life and death*, and will you not be ſerious? With what *diligence* and *earneſtneſs* doth an *Advocate* plead with *a man* in a Caſe wherein *he himſelf* is not concerned, either for *the life* of another, or the *inheritance* or *goods* of another? *a* and wilt not thou plead earneſtly *with God*, when thy *ſoul is in danger*, when it is a Caſe of *Eternal life* and *death*, as all matters that paſs between God and us are? Certainly, if we did conſider the *weight of the buſineſs*, the heart would be freed from this *gariſh wantonneſs*; if *Chriſt* had taken thee aſide into the *Garden*, as he took *Peter*, *James* and *John*, and thou hadſt ſeen him *praying* and *trembling* under his Agonies, thou wouldſt have ſeen that it is *no light matter* to go to God in a caſe of the ſalvation of ſouls, though thou haſt never ſo *much aſſurance of the iſſue*, for ſo Chriſt had; the *frequent return* of Chriſtian-

a *Si cum ſublimi homine non dicam pro vita, & ſalute noſtra, ſed etiam pro alicujus lucri commodo ſupplicamus totam in eum mentis, & corporis aciem defigentis, de ratu ejus trepi da expectatione pendemus non mediocriter formidantes, ne quid forte inoptum & incongruum verbum miſericordiam audientis avertat? quanto magis cum illi occultorum omnium cognitori pro imminenti perpetuam ortis periculo ſupplicamus, &c.* Caſſian. Col. 23 c. 7.

duties

duties maketh us to forget the *conſequence of them.* In *hearing the Word* be ſerious, it is *your life*, Deut. 32. 47, *Hearken unto the words of the Law, for this is not a vain thing, becauſe it is your life*; *thy everlaſting eſtate* is upon tryal, and the things that are ſpoken concern *your ſouls*; *every act* of communion with God, *every participation of his grace*, hath an influence upon *Eternity*; ſay therefore as *Nehemiah* in another caſe, *Neh.* 6. 3, *I am doing a great work, I cannot come down.* Can you have an heart to mind other things, when you are about ſo great a work as the ſaving of your ſouls?

8. Let every *experimental wandring make you more humble and careful.* If men did lay their wandrings to heart, and retract them, even *every glance* with a *ſigh*, the mind would not *ſo boldly*, ſo *conſtantly* digreſs and ſtep aſide, all actions diſpleaſing are not done ſo readily, therefore it is good to bewail theſe diſtractions, do not count them as *light things*; b *Caſſianus* ſpeaking of theſe *wandring thoughts*, ſaith, The moſt that come to Worſhip, being involved in *greater ſins*, ſcarce count *diſtraction of thoughts an evil*, and ſo the miſchief is *encreaſed* upon them; It is a *ſad thing* to be given up to a *vain mind*, and ſuch a *frothy ſpirit* as cannot be *ſerious*; therefore if we do ſoundly *humble* our ſelves for *theſe offences*, and they did once become *our burden*, they would not be *our practice*; c One ſaith, that huntſmen obſerve of *young dogs*, that if a *freſh game* come in view, they leave their *old ſcent*, but if *ſoundly beaten* off from it, they kindly take to their *firſt purſuit*; the application is eaſie, did we *rate our hearts* for this *vanity*, and pray againſt the ſins of our prayers with *deep remorſe*, this evil would not be *ſo familiar* with us.

b *Hæc omnia nonnullis qui ſunt craſſioribus vitiis involuti levia, atque à peccato pene aliena videntur, ſcientibus tamen perfectionis bonumetiam minimarum rerum multitudo graviſſima eſt.* Caſſian. Col. 23. cap. 7.

c *Hooker* on Acts 2. 37.

9. A *conſtant heavenlineſs and holineſs of heart*; if men were as they ſhould be, holy, ἐν πασῇ ἀναστροφῇ, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14, *In all manner of converſation*; in ſolemn duties, good and proper thoughts would be more natural and kindly to us; they that live in a conſtant communion with God, do not find it ſuch a tedious buſineſs to converſe with him; if they have any excurſion of thoughts, it is in their daily work, and the offices of the common life, which they are ever ſeaſoning with ſome gracious meditations and ſhort ejaculations; When they are in duty, they are where they would be; conſtant gravity and ſeriouſneſs is a great help to them: Men allow themſelves a lawleſs liberty in their ordinary converſations, and then in Prayer they know not how to gather up their hearts; ſuch as men are out of Prayer, ſuch they will be in Prayer; We cannot expect that pangs of devotion ſhould come upon us all of a ſudden, and that when we come reaking into the world, we ſhould preſently leap into a heavenly frame.

10. The next remedy is *frequent ſolemn meditation*; If the underſtanding were oftner taken up with the things of God, and our thoughts were kept in more frequent exerciſe, they would the better come to hand. There is a double advantage comes to us by *meditation.*

1. The ſoul gets more abundance of heart-warming knowledg, and therefore will not be ſo barren and dry, which certainly is a cauſe of wandring, *Pſal.* 45. 1, *My heart inditeth a good matter, and then my tongue is as the pen of a ready Writer*; A man that boyleth and concocts truths in his heart, hath a great readineſs of words and affections. There is *a*

good treaſure within him, Matt. 12. 35. out of which he may *ſpend freely*; * one expreſſeth it thus: He that hath ſtore of gold and ſilver in his pocket, and but a few Braſs farthings, will more readily upon every draught, come out with gold and ſilver than braſs farthings: So he that hath ſtocked his heart with holy thoughts, will not find carnal muſings ſo rife and frequent.

* *Cobbet* of Prayer.

2. *By uſe a man gets a greater command over himſelf*; When we conſtantly leave the thoughts at random, and never lay reſtraints upon them, it is in vain to think we ſhall keep them in order when we pleaſe; fierce Creatures are tame to thoſe that uſe to command them; every Art is difficult at firſt, as Writing, Singing, Playing upon an Inſtrument; but we get a facility by uſe and exerciſe: Yea, not only a facility, but a delight in them: and thoſe things that at firſt we thought impoſſible, by a little practice grow eaſie; Certainly, * *the way of the Lord is ſtrength to the upright*, and the more we ſet our ſelves to any good thing, the more readily and prepared are we for it.

* Prov. 11. 29.

How

How muſt we in all things give Thanks?

1 Theſ. V. 18.

In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God concerning you.

THE more comprehenſive any mercy or duty is, the greater they are.

There are three duties here together, which the Apoſtle exhorts to; all which have a kind of *Univerſality* annexed to them, of which my Text contains one.

1. *Rejoycing:* We muſt rejoyce evermore, for even holy mourning hath the ſeed of joy in it, which the ſoul finds by that time it's over, if not in it. Pſal. 126. 6. Pſal. 97. 21.

2. *Prayer:* Pray without ceaſing; We muſt be ever, at leaſt, in a holy diſpoſition to this duty, when we do it not actually. "Prayer is the Wall that compaſſes the City, there muſt be no gap in it. "It is as the Sun in the Firmament, it muſt always keep its round. Though not in the heretical ſenſe of *Euchites* and *Meſſalians*. Chryſ. *Orat.* 2. *de orand. Deum.*

3. *Thanksgiving: In every thing give thanks*, &c.

Obſerve in the words theſe two parts:

1. A Duty enjoyned.
2. A reaſon annexed.

I. In the Duty note four things.

1. The matter of it, *Thanksgiving.*
2. The object of it, implied, *God.*
3. The performers of it, *Believers*, for to them he writes, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 1, 2, 3.
4. The extent of it, *in every thing.*

II. In the Reaſon we have three things.

1. The ground of the duty, it is the will of God, the revealed will of God, the rule of all obedience. It is pleaſing and acceptable unto God. *Bez. in locum.*

Vel iſta per anthypophoram dicta ſunt. Id. Ibidem. *Illud autem τοῦτο referendum non ad gratiarum tantum actionem, ſed & ad preces.* Grot. *Annot. in locum. Comment. in* 1 Epiſt. *ad Theſſ.*

2. The

2. The manner of declaring Gods will to us in this behalf, it is the will of God in Christ Jesus; it is a Gospel duty, Christ Jesus was the Prophet and Messenger of it; it's suitable to the mind of Christ, it's accepted of God in Christ and for Christ. Lastly, Christ himself was a pattern of it, this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.

3. The special application, This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Mr. *Calvin* doth excellently shew the sweet harmony between these three duties, how one helps the other, but I cannot insist on that.

The lesson then which the Holy Ghost would have us learn in the Text, is thus sum'd up.

Doctr. *It is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning Christians, that in every thing they give thanks, that they be thankful,* as our word is more proper to our purpose.

1 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Chro. 29. 14. Phil. 2. 13. For though we have nothing of our own that good is, to give God but thanks, yet neither do we properly give him that, seeing both our giving, and the right manner of doing it, even in thanksgiving, is of the Lord.

Our continual praying, shews that we are always beggars, and our continual thanksgiving, shews us always debtors. Our thanks then indeed is the rebound of mercy heavenward whence it came, and a holy reflexion of the warm sun-beams of Gods benefits shining on us.

That which I principally aim at in the pursuance and pressing of this Truth, is, not only to speak somewhat to it in the nature, necessity and excellency of it, but to the extent of it as a special Case, *How Christians may be said to give thanks in every thing, and why?*

Quere. 1. Who are properly concerned in this duty.

2. Why, and upon what grounds are Christians bound to give thanks in every thing?

3. How, and in what manner are Christians to give thanks in every thing?

4. How in afflictions, and why?

5. How shall we bring our hearts to give thanks to God in every thing?

Quere 1. Who are, or ought to be thankful?

Ans. Psal. 148. The Lord hath a return and tribute of praise due to him from all Creatures: *David* names animate and inanimate Creatures, and bids them sing *Hallelujah*; as if all the World were but one consort of Musical Instruments tuned to Gods Glory. But he looks for it principally from men and Angels. From all men.

Εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸς ἀναπολογήτους, Rom. 1. 20, 21. ἐπεὶ γὰρ λόγον ἔχω τῷ ἡμετέρῳ κρατύσαντι καὶ ἡμᾶς ὑμνοποιὰς ἀληθινὸν σωτῆρα νομίζω τὸν εἶναι ὄντως εὐσεβῆναι, &c.

It is charged as an inexcusable sin uncapable of any Apology, upon natural men, *That when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.*

Upon which place, *Beza* brings in *Galen* a Heathen man, praising and blessing God, not with sacrifices and sweet incense, but acknowledging and proclaiming the Wisdom, Power, and goodness of God, &c. I write this saith he, as a Hymn, and account it the true Worship of that God.

The

The Law of Thankfulneſs is written upon the hearts of very Heathens, as may be proved at large not only from Heathen Inſtances, but Scripture alſo; as the *Philiſtines*, when they had taken *Sanpſon*, and killed *Saul*; and *Belſhazzar*, who *praiſed the gods of ſilver and gold, braſs, iron, wood and ſtone, &c.* which although it be enough to ſhame unthankful Chriſtians, yet it ſignified little; for all wicked men though they have cauſe, yet they have no heart to this work, at leaſt not often, not at all as it ſhould be. Judg. 16. 24. 1 Sam 31. 9. Dan. 5. 23.

Some are ſo curious as to enquire whether Reprobates in Hell have not cauſe to give thanks that their torments are leſs than the merits of their ſins, and for that the Juſtice of God is glorified in the inflicting of them: but this is foreign to our caſe.

The perſons engaged, and moſt bound to this duty are the *Theſſalonians* that believed, and all the faithful upon the ſame account.

Now howbeit all the ſervice we perform to God, both mediate and immediate Worſhip, the duties of both Tables, yea and the whole work of our Chriſtian obedience in a holy converſation, be but a return of thankfulneſs unto God, yet Thankſgiving in the Text and Doctrine, is taken more ſtrictly for a *particular part of Gods Worſhip* diſtinct from Prayer (of which he ſpake immediately before) which ſometimes includes praiſe and thanks too, *By which we render due praiſe to God for all or any of his benefits promiſed or beſtowed, and that with our hearts, lips and lives.* *Polanus.* Thankfulneſs deſcribed. *Filliucius* out of *Aquin.*

Some affirm that much of Religion is ſeen in piety to Parents, obſervance to our Betters, and thankfulneſs to our Benefactors. God is indeed all theſe to us. Yet the proper notion of our thankfulneſs refers to God as our Benefactor; every benefit from God makes the receiver a debtor: thankfulneſs is rather the confeſſing of our debt than the payment of it; and for as much as we are bound always to be thankful, it doth acknowledg we are always beholden to God, and always inſolvent. We *praiſe* God for all his Perfections, we *thank* God for his Benefits.

Now a child of God is bound to be thankful to God above all men, becauſe,

1. He is more competent
2. He is more concerned

} than any other.

1. More competent, by acts of reaſon and grace too. All that the Scripture ſpeaks as to the duty of thankfulneſs, may be referred to theſe Heads:

1. To know and acknowledg the Lords mercies.
2. To remember them, *i.e.* to record and commemorate them.
3. To value and admire them.
4. To blaze and proclaim them.

In all which a gracious ſoul is much more competent than a meer natural man, though indued with quick underſtanding, ſtrong memory, and great eloquence.

For the Spirit of God hath enlightned his ſoul, and taught him this leſſon; he is principled for it, he is a well tuned inſtrument; his heart boileth with good matter, and his *tongue is as the pen of a ready writer,* Pſal. 45. 1.

as

as *David* ſpeaks on this occaſion, when he ſpake of the praiſes of the King in his Song of Loves.

This Spirit of God in a thankful ſoul, is as the breath of the Organ, without which the pipes make no ſound; yea, as the breath of the Trumpeter, by which the Trumpet gives a certain and melodious ſound.

Epheſ. 5. 18, 19, 20. This is it that makes that noble Evangelical ſpirit, yea, that heavenly Angelical Spirit in Chriſtians: See a place for it, *Be not drunk with wine wherein is exceſs, but be filled with the ſpirit, ſpeaking to your ſelves in Pſalms and Hymns*, &c. *giving thanks always for all things unto God, and the Father in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* ſhewing that what wine doth in Poets and good-fellows, it makes them ſing and roar out Catches, by which they make Muſick to the Devil; ſo the Spirit of God in Saints is the principle of all true Thankfulneſs and holy joy towards God; and indeed there was a very gracious frame of ſpirit this way in Primitive Chriſtians.

Luk. 12. 48. II. More concerned, as having received more than others; *to whom ſoever much is given, of them much is required:* a proportion of duty according to the degree of every portion of mercy; whether you conſider what is given, or what is forgiven you.

There are two things, which every gracious ſoul will acknowledg; No man (ſaith he) in the world hath deſerved leſs of God than I, and none hath received more of God than I, how much then am I concerned to be thankful!

I have read of a holy man, that was ſeen once ſtanding ſtill with tears in his eyes, and looking up to Heaven; and being asked by one that paſſed by, why he did ſo, ſaid, I admire the Lords mercy to me that did not make me a Toad; that Vermine being then caſually at his feet.

The leaſt common mercy affects a gracious ſoul, that knows his deſert nothing but miſery. *Mephiboſheth* bowed himſelf and ſaid, *What is thy ſervant that thou ſhouldſt look upon ſuch a dead dog as I am*, when *David* had told him he ſhould have his Lands, and eat bread at his Table. When the Lord ſpares our lives, and gives us common mercies, we muſt admire and adore his goodneſs.

2 Sam. 9. 8.

And this leads me to the ſecond general Queſtion.

Quere. 2. Why, and upon what grounds Chriſtians are bound to give thanks in every thing?

Anſw. 1. *It is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus.*

The will of God in Chriſt Jeſus is the cleareſt Rule, and the higheſt Obligation to any ſoul for the performance of any duty. O that men would now adays ſtudy more, act by, and hold faſt to this rule: And ask Conſcience in the performance of every duty, is *this the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus?*

It was meet that this duty of thankfulneſs ſhould be preſt and practiſed under the Goſpel, becauſe it argues a ſpiritual and noble frame of Soul, the higheſt pitch of grace, which is a true Goſpel-frame.

David under the Old Teſtament had a new-Teſtament heart in this particular; his Pſalms, which were all penn'd upon emergent occaſions, are

are all *Tehilla* and *Tephilla*, Prayer and Praise; his heart and Harp were so tuned to the Praises of God, to Psalms of Degrees, to *Hallelujahs*, that some have thought the Lord is praised with those Psalms in Heaven.

Yet is it promised under the Gospel, that *he that is feeble shall be as David*; which some understand as to Praise and Thanksgivings, upon the account of Gospel-grace. Zach. 12. 8. *Greg* Hom 20. in Ezek.

More punctually, *this is the will of God in Christ Jesus, i. e.* Jesus Christ shews us the duty of Thankfulness both by pattern, and by precept; for he was not only ushered into the World with Songs of Thanksgiving by Angels, by *Zachary*, by *Mary*, by *Simeon*, by the Shepherds, *&c.* but the Lord Jesus himself was a great Pattern and President of Thankfulness all his life long, and in this also was a true Son of *David*: He thanked God frequently and fervently, *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes*, when his Disciples preached and cast out Devils. Luk. 1. 46, 68. Luk. 2. 13, 14, 20, 29. Matth. 11. 25.

Thus also when he raised *Lazarus*, *Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.* Joh. 11. 41.

When he was to eat common bread, he *blessed* it with *giving of thanks*. Much more, *consecrated* bread. Mark 8. 6. Luk. 22. 19.

Thus was he a Pattern of thankfulness, he did *in every thing give thanks*.

In like manner we find him reproving the nine Lepers for their unthankfulness, which shews that he held out thankfulness as a duty; personally he gave a Pattern and precept for it. Luk 17. 16, 17.

Now though this were enough to shew it, the will of God in Christ Jesus, yet these words reach further; namely, to shew that it is the strain of the Gospel in the Apostles Doctrine and Practice: for they through their Commission, and the great measure of Gods spirit in them, declared the will of God in Christ Jesus; *They worshipped, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.* Luk. 24. ult.

What the Apostle *Paul*'s spirit was in this (by whom so much of the will of God in Christ Jesus is revealed and penned) I need not rehearse, for all his Epistles breathe out the praises of Gods grace.

Thanks and Praise is the *homage* we owe to God for all we have and are, Therefore in every thing to be rendred. *Reas.* 2.

We live *precariously*, and at mercy; *by the Grace of God we are what we are*. God in his Sovereignty might have left us in the womb of nothing, and never made us, and have crusht us into nothing as soon as he made us, for *hath not the Potter power over his Clay?* Every moment we depend on him, and hold all from him, his power over us is arbitrary and infinite; to this Soveraign God we owe all, and therefore our thanks, *Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompenced to him again? for of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.* For not considering this, *Belshazzar* smarted, Act. 17. 28. 1 Cor. 15. 10. Rom. 9. Rom. 11. 35, 36. Dan 5. 25.

The God in whoſe hands thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy ways, haſt thou not glorified. The Birds that lift up their bills, at every drop they take, may mind us of this duty. Common and conſtant mercies deſerve ſpecial thanks, becauſe conſtant.

3. Chriſtians muſt give thanks in every thing, becauſe they have *ſpiritual* mercies innumerable and invaluable ſuperadded to common mercies, ſpecial and ſpiritual mercies in Chriſt Jeſus. *Bleſſed be God who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things in Chriſt. Bleſſed be God and the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope through the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, to an inheritance incorruptible,* &c. *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation,* &c.

Epheſ. 1. 3.
1 Pet. 1. 3, &c.
2 Cor. 1. 3.

Papiſts diſtinguiſh grace into grace freely given, and grace that makes men grateful to God the giver of grace: this diſtinction is idle and untrue: for all grace as freely given, obligeth us to be grateful, but yet ſpecial grace binds us to a more ſpecial gratitude; namely, ſanctifying and ſaving grace.

Gratia gratis data, & gratia gratum faciens, Bellarm. Valentia, &c.

The *decreeing* and *ſending* of Jeſus Chriſt to and for poor ſinners, the *opening* a fountain of grace in and by him, the *making* and ratifying a *Covenant* of grace, whereof the Lord Jeſus is the *Angel* and *Mediator*. The precious *promiſes* both abſolute and conditional thereupon, with all other choice Goſpel-Priviledges of Grace and Glory, as far as Gods al-ſufficiency, and the infinite merit, ſatisfaction, and righteouſneſs of the Son of God can reach, this deſerves a *ſutable* proportion of thanks and bleſſing from us both here and in heaven. *Becauſe thy loving kindneſs is better than life, my lips ſhall praiſe thee. i.e.* I will render ſpecial and continual praiſe for this above all other things.

Pſal. 63. 3.
Meioſis.

Quere 3. *How*, and in what *manner* Chriſtians are to give thanks in every thing?

Anſ. The difficulty lies here as to the *Act* and the *Object* both, 1. That is, how a man can *always* have his *heart* and *tongue* exerciſed unto this duty.

2. If he could be ſuppoſed to do this, yet *it ſeems* that every thing is not a fit *ſubject*-matter of Thankſgiving: For a great part of our life being *ſin* and miſery, which is rather the ground of *mourning* than of *thankſgiving*, our thankfulneſs ſeems to be reſtrained to a *narrower* ſphear than what the Text holds out.

Firſt, Can a child of God in any ſenſe give thanks for *ſin? Anſw.* No, not properly: Becauſe,

1. That which is the ground of *deteſtation*, cannot be the ground of *thankſgiving*; but ſin is a deteſtable thing.

Ezek. 5. 11.

2. That which produceth a *Curſe*, cannot properly cauſe *bleſſing*; but ſin is a curſed thing.

Gal. 3. 10.

3. As we may not *ſin that grace may abound*, nor do *evil that good may come of it*; ſo ſin cannot be the ground of thankſgiving, being contrary to the *Honour*, *Image*, and *Will* of God.

Rom. 6. 1.

4. Sin

4. Sin is none of Gods Creatures, therefore a Plague and not a benefit, therefore the ſubject of ſorrow and ſhame, not of thanks. *Deus non eſt autkor, ſed ultor peccati.*

Nevertheleſs *improperly*, by *accident*, occaſionally and conſequentially (as men ſpeak), ſin is a ground of thankſgiving. *How*? That the Lord by his unlimited power can ſo maſter ſin, and by his infinitely wiſe providence can ſo permit, diſpoſe of, and bound ſin, and by his free grace pardon ſin. Yea make grace ſuperabound, where ſin did abound; fetching light out of darkneſs, and make great ſinners become great Saints; and from all lay a foundation, and raiſe a revenue of infinite glory to himſelf: this is praiſe-worthy in God.

Now as *Pilate* and *Herod*, *Judas* and *Jews* are not to be praiſed for their treachery and cruelty againſt *Chriſt*, although they did, by all they did, *fulfill* and *execute* Gods Decrees in that behalf; ſo no man muſt thank *ſin*, or God for ſin, albeit God hath extracted *Treacle* out of this *Viper*. Act. 4.27, 28.

Wherefore when we read of a holy man that ſaid, He was more beholding to his corruptions than to his gifts and graces, becauſe the former made him humble, the latter made him proud. Or when we hear another cry out, *O felix culpa*, &c. Oh happy ſin of our firſt Parents, happy Tree of Knowledg, that bore ſuch fruit that brought forth ſuch a Promiſe, ſuch a Saviour, *&c.* I ſay, when we hear ſuch *Rhetorical* ſtrains as theſe from the Devout Ancients or Moderns, we muſt underſtand them *warily*.

Yet when the Lord doth demonſtrate the glory of his *Attributes* in *over-ruling* and *pardoning* ſin, to the ſalvation of poor ſinners, there is reaſon we ſhould magnifie him to the height.

1. Becauſe all the diſhonour which God hath in the World is upon the account of ſin.

2. Becauſe we our ſelves having diſhonoured him much that way, it is meet we adore and admire him the more in the power of his grace, that can fetch a *Pearl* out of this *dunghill*, and by ſuch a *foil* ſet off his *glory*.

Let us then, as many as profeſs to be made partakers of this grace, ſpeak good of the Lord for it, and give others occaſion ſo to do, as the *Romans* did to *Paul*; *God be thanked that ye were the ſervants of ſin, but ye have obeyed from the heart the Form of Doctrine which was delivered you, i.e.* That ye were once ſinners, and are now Saints. Rom. 6. 17.

2. Come we then from *Moral* evil, to *Penal* evil; that is, if we may not give thanks *properly* for *ſin*, without ſin; whether may we give thanks for *croſſes* and *calamities*?

A. Here ſay ſome, we may not properly give thanks for penal evils, becauſe as ſuch they are the ſtroaks of Gods vindictive Juſtice, the fruit of ſin, and deſtructive to the creature; in which ſenſe they have not *rationem beneficii ſed ſupplicii*, they are not benefits but puniſhments.

But whereas the Lord hath ſo ordered that all things ſhall work together for good to them that are good, and *croſſes* are ſome of thoſe things, they are hereby ſanctified and become the matter of thankſgiving to a child of God.

And this was that noble primitive frame of ſpirit among *Chriſtians*: under what providence ſoever, dark or light, ſweet or ſower, they were thankful in all; always thankful.

Aug. *Epiſt.* 77. *Quid melius & animo geramus, & ore promamus, & calamo exprimamus, quam Deo gratias? hoc nec dici brevius, nec audiri lætius, nec intelligi grandius, nec agi fructuoſius poteſt, Deo gratias.*—

St. *Auguſtine* upon the 132 *Pſalm* commendeth that ancient cuſtom among Chriſtians, in whoſe mouths you ſhould always hear theſe words, *Deo gratias*, thanks be to God: when they met and ſaluted one another, *Deo gratias*, God be thanked: when they heard any tidings of perſecution or protection, favour or frown, gain or loſs, croſs or comfort, ſtill *Deo gratias*, the Lord be thanked; at which cuſtom the *Circumcelliani* pick quarrels, but Saint *Auſtine* defends it as laudable and religious; *What*, ſaith he, *ſhall Brethren in Chriſt not give God thanks when they ſee one another? What better thing can we ſpeak, or think, or write, than this, God be thanked? nothing can be more compendiouſly ſpoken, nor more gladly heard, nor more ſolemnly underſtood, nor more profitably acted, than this, God be thanked.* Thus he. Such a frame of heart had holy *Job*, *the Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

Pſal. 34. 1. On Pſal. 115. ἀλλὰν γὲ ἔστως τῷ Θεῷ εὐχαριστέον ὡς τὸ εὐχαριστεῖν εἶναι. ἀ μὴ μόνον ἐν ταῖς εὐημερίαις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἀνατίως διακειμενίν, &c. Hieron.

And ſuch a one was in the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael*, *I will bleſs the Lord at all times.*——Notable is that of *Chryſoſtome*; there is nothing, (ſaith he) *nothing can we ſtudy more pleaſing to God, than to be thankful, not only in good days, but when things likewiſe fall out croſs*; this is the beſt Sacrifice and oblation we offer God. Of a like ſpirit was famous Mr. *Bradford*, Martyr, ſpeaking of Queen *Mary*, at whoſe cruel mercy he then lay; *If*, ſaid he, *ſhe will releaſe me, I will thank her; if ſhe will impriſon me, I will thank her; if ſhe will burn me, I will thank her*, &c. So ſaith a believing Soul, let God do with me what he will, I will be thankful.——

This made one of the Ancients to ſay, *It is peculiar to Chriſtians to give thanks in adverſity. To praiſe God for benefits, this* Jew *and* Gentile *can do; but to give God thanks in dangers according to the Apoſtles ſenſe, and in miſeries, and always to ſay, Bleſſed be God, this is the higheſt pitch of Virtue; for a true Chriſtians language is this, I cannot tell how I ſhould ſuffer leſs; theſe things are but little to my ſins, I deſerve much more at the Lords hands: here is your Chriſtian; ſuch a one takes up his croſs, and follows his Saviour; no loſs or croſs can diſhearten him; but as the Poet ſaith*, If the World break and fall about his ears, he would not be afraid. Thus St. *Hieron.*

Matth. 5.

By whom it ſhould ſeem, that to give God thanks for croſſes and afflictions, is τὶ περισσὸν, to be numbred among thoſe ſingular things which Chriſtians are bound to excel in beyond Heathens and Publicans, as to love enemies, to bleſs them that curſe, *&c.* to which our Saviour exhorts and commands.

Papiſts indeed tell us they are Counſels and Commands, and therefore required only of perfect ones, in order to merit, and Supererogation, which is a blaſphemous fancy; thoſe duties, and ſo this of thankfulneſs in every thing, is required of every Chriſtian, *virtute præcepti, This is the will of God concerning you*, ſaith my Text.

Why

Why and how we do give thanks in and for afflictions? *Quere* 4.

I. We muſt give thanks for good, afflictions are not evil but good: *David* tells you ſo, and wherein, which every child of God alſo finds. To this agrees that of the Schools, that croſſes are not evil, but good. Pſal. 119. 67, 68, 71. *Biel* & others.

1. Becauſe inflicted by the Lord who is the chief good.

2. Becauſe ſuffered by the Lord Jeſus, who is the chief good.

3. They conform us to the Lord, who is the chief good.

4. They prepare us for communion with the Lord in Heaven, which is our chief good; therefore be thankful for croſſes.

II. We muſt thank God for every token of his Fatherly love; but now croſſes and troubles are ſuch Fatherly love-tokens. *Whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth*; therefore give thanks for them, as well for the rod, as for bread. Heb. 12. 6.

This is thank-worthy, this is acceptable to God, God will thank us for ſuffering patiently, therefore we muſt thank him for inflicting it as a tender father on beloved ſons. 1 Pet. 2. 19, 20.

Would you be counted baſtards? *Alexander* caſhiered one of his name that would not fight; the *Eagle* is ſaid to caſt off thoſe young ones that cannot bear the ſight of the Sun; and ſome *Germans* counted ſuch Children ſpurious brats that could not ſwim: So our Heavenly Father will never own them for his Children that will not ſubmit to his rod, and kiſs it too. *Lord, when thou ſtroakeſt and when thou ſtrikeſt, thou art alike a Father*, ſaith St. *Auſtin*. *Et cum blandiris pater es, & cum cædis pater es.* Aug. in Pſal. 98.

III. The Lord by afflicting his People doth prevent ſin, and purge it. Therefore give thanks for it, for this is good, becauſe it frees us from the greateſt evil.

1. He prevents ſin by it; *Leſt* (ſaith *Paul*) *I ſhould be exalted above meaſure, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh, a meſſenger of Satan to buffet me.* 2 Cor. 12. 7.

2. He purgeth ſin by it; *by this* (ſaith the Prophet) *ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.* Iſa. 27. *Chryſoſt.*

Now do we not thank and pay the *Chyrurgeon* that lets out our bad blood, that launceth our feſtred ſores, that cuts out our proud and rotten fleſh? yes ſurely, we do thank him; do we not alſo thank the Phyſician, that keeps us to a ſtrict diet, confines us to our chamber, gives us bitter pills and potions, and croſſes our appetites? yes, we do thank him, for hereby he cures a diſeaſe, defends and preſerves both our health and life.

Now what elſe I beſeech you doth the Lord do more or leſs by all that we ſuffer at his hands? and doth not he deſerve our thanks, as well as the Phyſician and Chyrurgeon?

When we are vexed and pinched, then ought we more eſpecially to give the Lord thanks, who as a moſt indulgent Father will not ſuffer our corruptions to ſpread further, but repreſſes and corrects them by ſevere ſtrokes and ſcourges, ſaith *Lactantius*. *Lib. 5. de juſt. cap. 23.*

Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beateſt him with the rod, Prov. 23. 14.

rod, he ſhall not dye: thou ſhalt beat him with the rod, and ſhalt deliver his Soul from Hell. O bleſſed rod that can do this! Gods rod doth it ſurely. Then it's better to go to Gods houſe of correction, than to the place of torment; happy children who have the Lord for their Father, and for their Phyſician; this he takes for one of his eminent titles, The Lord thy Phyſician, *Exod.* 15.26. he doth it skilfully, eaſily, ſafely, quickly, throughly, according to all the properties of the beſt Artiſts, therefore thank him.

Βέλτιον ἐνταῦθα παιδευθῆναι ἢ βασάνων τοῖς πεμφθῆναι. *Naz.*

יהוה רפאך Exod. 15. 26. *Tuto, cito, ſine dolore.*

IV. We muſt thank the Lord for afflicting us, and for laying the croſs upon us, becauſe it is ſo far below what we deſerve at his hands. What is a drop of wormwood ſweetned, to the gall of bitterneſs? to the Lake of fire and Brimſtone? hear what *Zophar* tells *Job: O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee, and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is: know therefore that God exacteth of thee leſs than thine iniquity deſerveth.*

Job 1. 5, 6.

The like ſaith holy *Ezra*; and then ſurely we have much more cauſe to ſay ſo; and is not this ground of thankfulneſs. If thou ſuffer a thouſand evils, thou wilt never ſuffer what thou meriteſt, ſaith that Father.

Κἂν μύρια παθῇς δοκεῖ σοι πάντα τὴν ἐξ ἴσου δίκην ἔχειν. *Chryſ. in* Pſal. 41. 1.

Jeſus Chriſt drank off the draggy part of the cup for us; we do but as it were ſip for faſhion, that we may ſeem to pledg: for to drink as he drank it, we cannot, we need not, *Matt.* 20. 22.

Thank God then that thou haſt ſo little a ſhare of it, when all was thy portion by right and juſtice; this is thank-worthy.

Corde Gregorium, lib. 2. *in* Ezek. *Hom.* 19.

V. We muſt give thanks in every thing, even in and for afflictions, under the rod and croſs, becauſe thereby the Lord doth diſcipline us, and learns us much which elſe we never would have learned.

Pſal. 119. 71, 72.

By this *David* learned Gods Commandments, and they became dearer to him *than thouſands of gold and ſilver.*

Job 36. 8, 9, 10.

By this the Lord opens the ear to diſcipline, ſaith *Elihu*; even when men are *bound in fetters, and be holden in Cords of affliction: then he ſheweth them their work, and their tranſgreſſion that they have exceeded: he openeth alſo their ear to diſcipline*, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. For as wax unleſs it be heated and ſoftned, takes no impreſſion of the Seal; ſo no man unleſs exerciſed with much affliction, will receive the prints of divine wiſdom.

The Croſs teacheth more the way to heaven, than all the Doctors. *Taulerus.*

παιδεύω. Heb. 12. Luke 23. 22.

The word commonly uſed by the Holy-Ghoſt in the New-Teſtament for chaſtize, ſignifies properly to teach a child as a School-maſter or Father with a rod; this is Gods way of teaching, and the beſt Scholars in Chriſts Colledg have come by their learning this way; *it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth*; by this the Poet ſaith, wiſe *Ulyſſes* was trained up. We uſe to ſay, they are uſually the beſt Scholars that have bought their learning deareſt. I am ſure this is the choiceſt Saints *Academy.*

Lam. 3. 27. *Multa tulit, fecitq; puer, ſudavit & alſit.*

VI. Give thanks in and for afflictions, becauſe hereby the Lord fits us for Heavenly glory.

Saints

Saints are called *veſſels of mercy, prepared unto glory*; but how do men make, and prepare veſſels? if it be a veſſel of earth, the Potter beats the clay to make it well tempered, then he moulds it on the wheel, then he bakes it in the oven, and then it's fit for uſe. Rom. 9. 20. *Sub malleo premitur aurum tunſionibus, ut vas fabricetur magni precii: Sic veluti ſub malleo ſunt juſti, premunturq; laboribus, ut fiant vaſa magnæ gloriæ.* Gerhardus.

If it be a veſſel of wood, it hath many a turn and many a cut, before it's fit.

If it be a veſſel of gold or ſilver, it hath both heats and knocks before it be compleat.

So muſt every veſſel of mercy be ſerved before it be fit for glory; *we muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.* Thus the Apoſtle *Peter* tells us alſo, *that the tryal of our Faith being much more precious than gold, will be found to the praiſe and glory of God*; for the croſs is the whetſtone of Faith, and all other Grace, ſetting an edge and luſtre upon it; it is the awakening of the North-wind and South-wind, to make theſe ſpices flow. Act. 14. 22. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. *Crux eſt cotticula fidei.* Hieron. Cant. 4. 16. *Aug. in* Pſ. 26.

The ſtone that is moſt-hewed, cut, carved, and poliſhed, is uſually ſet in the chiefeſt part of the building. So are ſuffering Saints prepared for the higheſt degrees of Glory.

For theſe are prepared the *Aureolæ*, thoſe additional flowers and ornaments that all ſhall not partake of, ſay the Schools.

Thoſe only that were beheaded or ſlain for the witneſs of Jeſus, reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years. So that it may be ſaid of the Lords ſufferers, as *David* ſpeaks, *though ye have lyen among the pots, yet ſhall ye be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with gold.* This may be truly ſaid, when the Lord ſhall *change our vile bodies, and faſhion them like to his glorious body.* Rev. 20. 4. Pſal. 68. 13.

Notable and curious is that of *Tertullian* upon *Jacobs* bleſſing the two ſons of *Joſeph* with his hands a-croſs, which is granted by all (*decuſſatis manibus*) that he might bleſs *Ephraim* the youngeſt with the bleſſing of the firſt born, that we might know no bleſſing comes to us more kindly and properly than by the croſs; therefore give thanks in and for thy afflictions. Gen. 48. 14. *Ut intelligeremus benedictionem non niſi per crucem haberi poſſe.* Tert. *de Bapt.* cap. 8.

VII. It is a very high priviledg for a Chriſtian to be conformed to Chriſt; to be Conformiſts to Chriſt, is to be nonconformiſts to the World, *Rom.* 12. 2. but now what doth more conform us unto Chriſt than the Croſs? therefore give thanks for it. *That I may know the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable to his death.* This is part of that excellent knowledg for which he accounted all other worldly priviledges but dung. To this conformity in afflictions unto Chriſt we are predeſtinated. This priviledg appears in verſe 17, *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall be glorified together.* *Oportet nos crucifigi cum crucifixo, ut glorificemur cum glorificato.* Macar. *Hom.* 12. Phil. 3. 10. Rom. 8. 29.

This way Chriſt entred into Glory. *Ought not Jeſus to have ſuffered theſe things, and ſo to have entred into glory?* now if we will enter with him, we muſt follow after him, how? by taking up his Croſs. Luke. 24. 26.

Chriſt like a good Phyſician firſt taſted the Medicine that he gave his

Chriſtus prius ipſe bibit potionem quam ſuis paravit. Bern. *parv. Serm.* Luth. *i* Exod. cap. 15.

Patient.

Patient. The Croſs of Chriſt ſweetens our ſufferings in the bitterneſs of them: as that piece of wood ſweetned the waters of *Marah*, being caſt into them.

Therefore *John* wrote to the Saints as partakers together of a great priviledg, when he ſaid, *Companions in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Rev. 1. 9. verſ. 3.

Then never hope to go another way than the Captain of our ſalvation hath led us; for if we baulk his track, we are loſt; muſt we not then give thanks for affliction that conforms us to our head?

Aug. in Pſ. 52.

VIII. The Croſs is a Chriſtians banner, his honour, and the ſpecial favour of the Lord towards him; therefore be thankful for it.

Phil. 1. 7.

Let not this ſeem a riddle or paradox, *I have you* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *in my heart, for as much as in my bonds and in the defence of the Goſpel, ye are all partakers of my grace*; where, by grace many underſtand, a ſpecial act of Gods favour to him and them, wherewith they were to account themſelves highly graced.

Verſ. 29.

Hence he ſaith again a little after, *to you it's given in the behalf of Chriſt not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer for his ſake.* This he accounts a peculiar gift of God to them, whereof but few in compariſon do partake.

Utrumq; oſtendit dei donum, quia utrumq; dicit eſſe donatum. Aug. Vaſquez. *in locum.*

Hence ſaith one upon that place, it is a moſt noble, yea, and almoſt divine thing to ſuffer for the Lord Jeſus.

Phil. 2.

For the Lord gave Chriſt himſelf on this very account, *a name above every name.* Mark what the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith, *If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are you, for the Spirit of God and of Glory reſteth on you.*

1 Pet. 4. 14.

חרום The Spirit *per* He *emphaticum.*

Which words muſt be *underſtood emphatically*, the higheſt manifeſtation, and operation of the ſpirit of God. Gods Spirit manifeſteth it ſelf variouſly in ſeveral ſubjects; but in ſufferers for Chriſt, the very *Spirit and quinteſſence* of glory ſeems to be extracted and poured on them.

Upon all theſe accounts, and many more ſuch, we are to thank God for croſſes, and corrections, becauſe the good of them doth flow from Gods *goodneſs*, not from their *nature.*

When the Horſeleech by the Phyſicians direction ſucks our blood, and thereby performs a cure, the Horſeleech is not to be thanked, but the Phyſician for his application. So the Lord can make the bloody perſecutors of his people to be inſtruments of good to his people; no thanks to them, but to him for it.

Quere 5.

How ſhall a Chriſtian bring his heart to this holy and heavenly frame, ſo as in every thing to give thanks?

Anſw.

Hearken to theſe few directions, and lay them up in your hearts, and draw them out in your conſtant practice.

Canticum novum & vetus homo malè concordant. Aug

I. *Pray earneſtly for the Spirit of God*; without that Spirit thou canſt never pray or praiſe God duly, becauſe not ſpiritually; none can ſanctifie the Lord God in his heart (which is the firſt Principle of this work) but he *whoſe* heart the Lord hath ſanctified.

The

The Holy Spirit breathing in a man, makes him a living Organ, tuned to, and ſounding out his praiſe.

Praiſe is comely for the upright, but as uncomely in a carnal mouth as a Jewel in a ſwines ſnout. Pſal. 33. 1.

The pompous dreſſes and melodious quires of *Magnificats*, without the Spirit of God breathing among them, is but as *a ſounding braſs and a tinkling ſymbal.* *Non muſica cordula ſed cor, Non clamans ſed amans cantat in aure dei.*

For indeed without the Spirit of God in men, they neither can nor will remember the Lords mercies, nor conſider them, nor value them, nor be affected with them, nor blaze the praiſe of them. *The dead*, ſaith *David, do not praiſe thee*; dead hearts produce dead works, it is the ſpirit that quickens. 1 Cor. 14. 15. I will ſing with the Spirit.

II. Labour to *get a continual quick ſight and ſenſe of ſin:* this will make thee ſenſible of every mercy, and thankful for it. So the provocation and merit of ſin is nothing but curſes, death and wrath being due to it; that yet they ſhould be ſo tenderly ſpared, and inſtead of miſeries ſhouldſt enjoy bleſſings, how ſhouldſt thou be affected with this, as *Mephiboſheth* was with *David*'s kindneſs to him! an humble broken heart is the moſt thankful heart, this was moſt eminent in the moſt eminent Saints, 1. *Jacob*, 2. *David*, 3. *Paul*, &c. Gen. 32. 10. *per Pſalmos.* 1 Tim. 1. 12, *ad* 17.

He that knows he hath forfeited all, knows he deſerves nothing but the reward of that forfeiture, which is wrath; and he that deſerves nothing, thanks God for every thing, even for the leaſt drop and crumb. *Invitat ad magna, qui grataner accipit modica.* Caſſiod.

3. *Behold every mercy coming to thee in the ſtream of Chriſts blood, and through the Covenant of Grace*; this gives the mercy both an eſtimate and a reliſh; this doth both ſanctifie it, and ſweeten it, and ſublimate it; a cruſt of brown bread coming thus, is better than a purſe full of gold another way; as that Kings kiſs to one friend, was ſaid to be better gold, than a cup of gold which he gave another friend. *Annima immerſa ſanguina Chriſti aurea redditur, ut manus in aurum ſique factum injecta deaurâtur.* Chryſoſt.

He ſent *redemption to his people, he remembred his Covenant for ever, holy and reverend is his name.* The deliverance there was in *David*'s account, and that truly, the more thank-worthy, as being upon a covenant-account: for thus every mercy is a token of the Lords favour to his favourite; it is that which makes common mercies to become ſpecial mercies. Pſal. 111. 9.

Carnal men, ſo they enjoy mercies, they mind not which way they come in, ſo they can but have them; but a child of God knows that every thing that comes through Chriſts hands is the better for it, and taſtes the ſweeter by far. *Non tam beneficium, ſed ratio beneficii attendenda eſt.*

IV. *Look on thy mercies as anſwers to thy Prayers; and bleſs the Lord for them on that account*; for that's double mercy.

1. That God hath inclined and directed thine heart to beg ſuch a mercy; for this is a ſpecial act of the Spirit of adoption, *Rom.* 8. 26, 27.

2. That he hath anſwer'd ſuch Prayers, for this is a ſign he accepts thee in Chriſt. Many bleſſings come in unasked for, and unlooked for: yet theſe require thankfulneſs.

But when the Lord is enquired of for the things we have, and doth grant them *to us*, this is a bleſſing upon his own inſtitution, and a ſeal
Pſ. 66. 16, 17. to his promiſe; hear *David*, *Come near* (ſaith he) *and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul: I cryed to the Lord, and he was extolled with my tongue*; as if he had ſaid, this was a ſignal favour for the Lord to grant what I petitioned him for, and therefore deſerves a ſpecial acknowledgment.

1 Sam. 1. 20. For this *Hannah* calls her Son *Samuel*, i. e. asked of God; and *Leah*
Gen. 29. 33. calleth her ſecond Son, *Simeon*, i.e. Hearing, becauſe God heard her Prayer for him.

Gen. 39. 8. And *Rachel* called her Son *Nepthali*, i. e. Wreſtling, becauſe ſhe wreſtled for him; now as *Samuels* ſhould be *Lemuels*, i. e. dedicated to God, ſo all our mercies we get by Prayer, ſhould be the more ſolemnly dedicated to the Lord by thankſgiving, and ſuch a frame of a thankful heart is a ſpiritual frame.

V. *When any of Gods dealings, do either draw us or drive us nearer to God, this is a ſpecial mercy.* When we conſider that well, we cannot but be greatly affected with it, and will be accordingly thankful for the mercy, or the diſpenſation is thereby the more merciful: mercies are drawing cords, afflictions are whip-cords to drive us; by both if we are brought nearer to God, thank him.

If the chief Shepherd hunt us together, and keep us from ſtragling, and bring us under command, this is a mercy to Chriſts ſheep. If the Lord
Hoſ. 2. 6. *hedg up our way with thorns*, that we cannot find our Lovers, this is a
Verſ. 8, 9. mercy.

And if the Lord recover his mercies from us, that in the want of them we may know he was the Founder and Fountain of them, this is a mercy.

When *Abſalom* burnt *Joab*'s corn, it was to make *Joab* (who before
Amos 4. 6, to verſ. 12. that *kept off*) come to him. So all the angry diſpenſations of God toward his children are, that they return to him.

That ſtorm that ſinks and ſplits ſome ſhips, drives others faſter into the Haven. So do the troubles of this World make a true Chriſtians voyage toward Heaven the ſpeedier.

VI. *That Soul that is truly and ſpiritually thankful, will ſo order his whole converſation, that God may have the glory of it.* This the Pſalmiſt who was well skil'd in this Art, ſeems to point at often. *Who ſo offereth praiſe,*
Pſal. 50. 23. *glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the Salvation of God.*

We cannot better glorifie God than by a well-ordered converſation: this is in every thing to give thanks indeed. So likewiſe in praiſing the
Pſ. 106. 1, 2, 3. Lord, *Hallelujah: O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* There is, 1. The Doxology. 2. Invitation. 3. The Reaſon, that we ſhould, and why we ſhould give thanks always.

But who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can ſhew forth all his praiſe? i. e. it is impoſſible for any man in the world to do this great duty

duty aright, and as he ſhould; *Bleſſed are they that keep judgment, that do righteouſneſs at all times*; As if he had ſaid, This indeed is a vaſt duty, but yet he makes the beſt eſſay towards it, that ſets himſelf conſtantly to ſerve God and keep his Commandments.

Now this no man can do neither perfectly, but only by the merits and in the ſtrength of Chriſt; he, making it the deſire of his ſoul to ſerve the Lord, is accepted, though endeavours fall ſhort, and therefore is pronounced bleſſed.

For to be a doer of the work by Evangelical obedience, makes him bleſſed in his deed; labour then to bleſs the Lord, not only in words, but in deed, and you ſhall be bleſſed. James 1. 25.

VII. If we would offer thanks to the Lord acceptably, *Let us do it in the name of the Lord Jeſus.* Thus are we directed by the Spirit of God. Epheſ. 5. 20.

1. Becauſe all mercy comes to us by him.

2 Becauſe nothing is accepted but in him.

3. Becauſe it is one part of his Prieſtly Office to receive the Prayers and Praiſes of the Saints in his golden Cenſer upon the Golden Altar, with much Incenſe. *By him therefore let us offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.* Alluding to that of the Prophet, who calls it, *The calves of our lips*; that through Chriſt's Propitiatory Sacrifice our Euchariſtical Sacrifices are accepted, and that we muſt offer theſe under the Goſpel continually *jugiter*; Alluding to the daily Sacrifice: now this muſt needs ſanctifie our ſervice, becauſe the *Altar ſanctifies the Gift*, and therefore mention is made of a Golden Altar in this caſe.

Per eundem eſt decurſos beneficiorum & recurſus. Rev. 8. 3, 4. Heb. 13. 19. Hoſ. 14. 2. *Fugo ſacrificium.*

Is it the Will of God in Chriſt Jeſus, that in every thing we give thanks? Then this ſerves to condemn the horrid ingratitude of Chriſtians. *Uſe.*

1. Thoſe that in nothing will give thanks, at no time, for no mercy; theſe are ſwine that devour all that drops from the Tree of Gods bounty, and never look up whence it cometh. Theſe are worſe than the *Oxe* and *Aſs that know their owners and Maſters crib.* Theſe are meer Heathens, who though they *profeſs they know God, yet do not glorifie him as God, nor are thankful.* Theſe are like Buckets that run greedily down into a Well, when they are empty with open mouth; but when they be full, they turn their hinder part upon the well that filled them. Thus do unthankful men call greedily for mercies; and when God hath filled them, they turn the back, and not the face. Iſa. 1. *Per rara gratis hominesreperiuntur* Cicero.

2. Another kind of unthankful men is that ſort, who having received mercies from God, arrogate the honour of them to themſelves.

Let *Papiſts* and *Pelagians*, old and new, who attribute more to free-will than to grace, which the one makes the root of merits, the other gives the caſting of the ſcale in mans converſion to it; let theſe ſee how by ſuch Principles they can acquit themſelves from the crime of Sacrilegious ingratitude, for they rob God of his Glory; and then let

them hear not me, but St. *Austine* thundring against them, *O Lord, he that assumes the glory of any good he hath, to himself, and ascribes it not to thee, that man is a thief and a robber, and like the Devil, who robbeth thee of thy Glory.*

Soliloq;cap.15 Quid de bono sua, Domine, gloriam sibi quærit, & non tibi, hic fur est & latro, & similis diabolo, &c.

Thus also they who attribute their Riches, Children, Honours, Victories, Health, Safety, Knowledg, *&c.* to their Wits, Labours, Merits, these are ingrateful robbers of God.

Thus they burnt Incense to their Drag and Yarn.

Hab. 1. 15, 16.

Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* gloried in the great *Babel* of his own building.

Dan. 4. 30.

Thus the *Assyrian* also ranted, and vaunted himself, as if by his own great Wisdom and Valour he had conquered the Nations.

Isa. 10. 13, 14, 15.

But mark the end of these men: How the Lord took it, and how he dealt with them for it; He turned *Nebuchadnezzar* out to grase among the beasts; He kindled a fire in the *Assyrians* Forest, and burnt it; He struck *Herod* that he was eaten up with worms, because he gave himself, and not God the glory.

Act. 12. 23.

3. Another sort of unthankful ones there is, that seem to be very thankful, but it is only complementally, and with the lip. These are like Apes that eat up the Kernel, and leave God the shells; they care not to go to the cost of a heart, or a life-thankfulness, they are cursed hypocrites, they put him off with the blind and the lame in Sacrifice, and never once give him the Male of their Flock. God will pay them in their own coyn; they are thankful in jest, and God will damn them in earnest.

Mal. 1. 14.

Lact. *Instit.* c. 3 *Non constare homini ratio pietatis potest, &c.*

That man (saith *Lactantius*) *cannot be a godly man, that is unthankful to his God.* * And *Aquinas* saith, *That unthankfulness hath in it the root and matter of all sin:* For it denies or dissembles the goodness of God, by which we live, move, and have our being; yea, and all our blessings, the thankful acknowledgment whereof is our indispensable homage unto God.

* *Materialiter per connexionem, & adhærentiam.*

Unthankfulness was a huge ingredient into *Adam*'s sin: To sin against his Maker as soon as he was made: Yea, by whom he was so fearfully and wonderfully made: little lower than the Angels.

Psal. 139.

Unthankfulness was the sin of *Noah* and *Lot* after their deliverances, the one from water, the other from fire.

Gen. 9.

Gen. 19.

The sin of *Israel*, that forgat their Rock, their Husband that found them in *the waste howling Wilderness*, and when they *lay in their blood, no eye pitying them, cast out to the loathing of their persons.*

Deut. 32.

Ezek. 16. *per totum.*

The sin of *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9.

The sin of *Solomon*, 1 King. 11. 9.

The sin of *Hezekiah*, 2 Chron. 31.

Peremptoria res est ingratitudo, hostis gratiæ, inimica salutis. Bern. *Serm.* 1. *de 7 miser. Ingratitudo est ventus urens, & exsiccans fontem gratiæ, fluentia misericordiæ,* Idem.

The great sin of the Gospel is unthankfulness, by sinning against the light, love, free-grace, and rich patience of God in it; this is *to turn his grace into wantonness*; to prefer darkness before light, to *neglect so great Salvation*, not to come under Christs wing when he calls to us; to *despise his goodness and long-suffering, leading to repentance, not to come to him that we may have life*; to resist his Spirit, and trample on his blood.

The sin of the greatest sinners in the Book of God is unthankfulness.

The sin of the Angels that kept not their first station; The sin of *Cain* in his offering; The sin of the *Sodomites.*

The

The ſin of the Old World; the ſin of *Saul*; the ſin of *Jeroboam* the ſon of *Nebat*; the ſin of *Nabal*; the ſin of *Hanun*; the ſin of *Judas*; the ſin of *Julian*, and of Antichriſt, all is unthankfulneſs. *Quouſque ſe diffundit gratia, eò patet ingratitudo.*

I ſhall conclude with a ſolemn Exhortation to all that hear this Word, and profeſs the Lord Jeſus, and to be ruled by the Will of God in Chriſt Jeſus revealed, that they ſtudy and practice this great, this comprehenſive duty of thankfulneſs; conſider, that no People in the World have ſuch cauſe of thankfulneſs as Chriſtians: They have received more mercy than any, therefore there is the more of them required, therefore the Lord takes their unkindneſs the more unkindly. Sins againſt mercy will turn mercy into cruelty, and patience into fury. *Exhort.* *Creſcentibus donis creſcunt donorum rationes.*

To be unthankful to a bountiful God, is for a froward child to beat his mothers breaſts that gave him ſuck, and to kick his Fathers bowels. Deut. 32. 6.

The Lord, that he might upbraid his peoples ingratitude, compares them to a Bullock that was fatted in good paſture, and then kicked, *Deut.* 32. 15, to *verſ.* 25. And what this coſt, you may read there.

When the Lord would preſerve in his People the memorial of his mercies, ſee how he orders them: Every man was to come with a basket of fruits, and the Prieſt was to take it, and ſet it down before the Lord, and he that brought it was to make a ſolemn confeſſion of his own poverty and wretchedneſs, of Gods goodneſs and faithfulneſs to him, and of his engagements to the Lord for the ſame: Hereby the Lord let them know that they had all from him, and held all at mercy; and this was their homage that they paid him. Oh, what ſhall we then render to the Lord for all his benefits? *Who were Syrians ready to periſh, who with our ſtaff paſt this Jordan*, and now are two bands; who have not only nether-ſprings, but upper alſo, the Lord hath opened a fountain and a treaſure for us? Deut. 26. 1. to 10.

Think of this all you *Male-contents* and murmurers, read over your mercies, preſerve a Catalogue of them, compare them with what others enjoy. It is not with you as with Heathens; you have the Goſpel, if it totters, as if it were in a moving poſture from you, thank your unthankfulneſs for it.

You have had it with peace and plenty, and if that hath glutted you, and the Lord is now curing your ſurfeit by a ſparer diet, thank your wantonneſs for it.

Yet conſider *Turks* and *Tartars* are not in your bowels, burning your houſes, raviſhing wives and daughters, killing old, ſick, and infants, carrying away the reſt Captives, drinking healths in your dead Nobles ſculls digged out of their graves, yet all this is done among the poor Proteſtants in *Tranſilvania*, Sword, Famine, and Peſtilence, making havock in that flouriſhing Country, not to ſpeak of other places, what is felt or feared; is not this ground of thanks?

Conſider yet again, what we have had long, and ſtill have, *though the Land is full of ſin from one end to the other*. What we have deſerved, and yet do, even to be ſtripped naked of all life and liberty, peace and plenty, to have our doors ſhut up, our lights put out, our Teachers all driven into corners, the good Land to ſpew us out, and the abomination that maketh deſolate to enter in among us; our Land to keep her Sabbaths, becauſe we prophaned the

the Lords Sabbaths; the voice of the ſcreech-owl to be heard inſtead of the voice of the Turtle; *It is the Lords mercies we are not conſumed:* For what priviledg or Patent have we to be ſecured and indempnified above others?

How long ago had Divine Juſtice made ſhort work with us, if Divine Patience had not been ſtretched to long-ſuffering? If Mercy had not held back the hand of Gods Vengeance, as the Angel caught *Abrahams* Knife when it was lifted up to kill his Son? for ſurely methinks Mercy and Juſtice have been long wreſtling, and the Lord hath ſaid long of *England*, as he ſaid of *Ephraim, How ſhall I give up England? how ſhall I make thee as Admah and Zeboim*, as *Sodom and Gomorrah?*

Now conſider this all ye that forget the Lords benefits, leſt he come not only as a moth to you, as he ſeems to be already in your Trade, in your Health, in your Food, but as a Lion to tear and go away. Wherefore, would you value your mercies, conſider others miſeries; would you thank God for them? conſider your abuſe and unworthineſs of them; would you continue and encreaſe them? be thankful for them; would you taſte ſweetneſs in them? get a ſanctified uſe of them; would you honour God in every condition? make a holy improvement of every diſpenſation; would you be Chriſtians indeed? *In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Chriſt Jeſus concerning you.* Turn your hearts and tongues to it here, and you ſhall be choſen into the Quire of Angels to perform it for ever in Heaven.

Haud quiequam ita proprie terris repreſentat cæleſtis habitationis ſtatum, ſicut alacritas deum laudantium. Bern. *Ser.* 1. *in* Cant.

How

How may we get rid of Spiritual Sloth, and know when our activity in duty is from the Spirit of God?

Pſal. CXIX, 37. partult.

Quicken me in thy way.

THis Pſalm ſhines and ſhews it ſelf among the reſt —*Sicut inter ignes Luna minores.* A Star in the firmament of the Pſalms, of the firſt and greateſt magnitude; this will readily appear if you conſider either.

I. The manner it is compoſed in, or

II. The matter it is compoſed of.

I. The manner it is compoſed in is very elegant.

2. The matter it is compoſed of is very excellent.

I. The manner it is compoſed in is very elegant, full of art, rule, method, Theological matter in a Logical manner, a Spiritual Alphabet framed and formed according to the *Hebrew* Alphabet.

II. The matter it is compoſed of is very excellent, full of rare ſublimities, deep myſteries, gracious activities, yea glorious extaſies. The Pſalm is made up of three things.

1. Prayers. 2. Praiſes. 3. Proteſtations.

1. Prayers to God. 2. Praiſes of God. 3. Proteſtations unto God.

My Text belongs unto the firſt, and may fitly be ſtiled *David's* Letany; where you have.

1. His *Libera Domine*, *Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity.*

2. His *Exaudi Domine*, *Quicken me in thy way.*

In this, theſe three parts are conſiderable.

1. The Act, *Quicken.* 2. The Subject, *Me.* 3. The Object, *thy way.*

In the proſecution of which Scripture I ſhall do theſe three things.

1. Explicate the Terms. 2. Deduce a Corollary. 3. Reſolve the Caſes.

I. For

I. For explication. *Quicken.* There is a two-fold quickening.

1. Proper and moral, 2. Improper and metaphorical.

1. Proper and moral; which is two-fold, 1. Total. 2. Partial.

1. Total Which is the raiſing a dead body to natural life; thus was *Lazarus* raiſed, *John* 11. 43, 44. So was *Drithelme* of *Northumberland* raiſed, if credit may be given to *Bede* * and *Herus Ameneus.*

Hiſt. Ang. l. 5. cap 13.

* *Plato, lib.* 10. *de Rep.*

2. Partial, which is the reſtoring a body declined and decayed with ſickneſs, or ſorrow, to ſpirits and vigorous energies. So was *David*, whoſe body by grief and ſorrow was made a meer Skeleton, *Pſal.* 31. 10, 17. *Hezekiah* by ſickneſs brought ſo low, that he was become ſpiritleſs, yet he was raiſed up again, upon which he compoſes that rare Hymn or Canticle of praiſe to God, *Iſa.* 38. 10.

Ferrarius, l. 7. Reip. fol. 1623

II. Improper and methaphorical, which is likewiſe two-fold.

1. Total. 2. Gradual.

I. Total, which is the raiſing of a Soul ſtark dead in ſin to Spiritual Life, *Epheſ.* 1. 2, *and you hath he quickened, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.*

II. Gradual, which is the raiſing of a dull and drouſie Soul from ſloth and ſluggiſhneſs, to high, yea higheſt degrees of vivacity and activity; for this you have *David* praying here, and in *Pſal.* 143. 11, *Quicken me, O Lord, for thy Names ſake.* In this diſcription it will be very neceſſary to explain ſloth and activity.

1. Spiritual Sloth is three-fold.

1. Reſolving Sloth. 2. Delaying Soth. 3. Diſturbing Sloth.

1. Reſolving Sloth, is, when a Soul is ſettled upon its lees, and reſolves to lie ſtill, and never to ſtir in that momentous concernment of its own eternal Salvation. *Solomon* excellently deciphers this, *Prov.* 26. 14. *As the door turns upon his hinges, ſo doth the ſlothful upon his bed*; as the door turns upon the hinges, and never ſtirs from his place, ſo the ſlothful turns upon the bed of ſecurity, and never turns from his purpoſe. *Jer.* 44. 16, 17. they were reſolved to worſhip the Queen of Heaven, come life, come, death. Such was the Souldiers reſolution, who had on his Target God and the Devil pictured, under God *ſi tis non vis*, under the Devil *iſte rogitat.*

Ruffut.

2. Delaying Sloth, when a perſon doth intend to look after Soul-concernments, but not yet; they will borrow a day, a little time. Much like that ſluggard, Prov. 6. 10, *Yet a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands to ſleep.* When the ſluggard is call'd to ariſe in the morning, he reſolves to do it, only intreats one little, one ſhort nap more, and then he will ariſe. So when ſome are called to awaken, ariſe and walk with God in his way in the morning of their age, they crave one ſhort nap more firſt, and then they will do it; give them leave to get ſuch an eſtate, to obtain ſuch an honour, to match ſuch a child, to ſatisfie ſuch a luſt, and then will they be for God. Such a ſluggard was *Auſtin*, a little longer, O Lord, a little longer, preſently, preſently. *Matth.* 25. 10. the five fooliſh Virgins reſolved to have oyl in their lamps and veſſels, only they would take a nod. Oh how dangerous

Paululum, paululum, modo & modo, & hoc erat ſine modo. Aug. *lib. confeſſ.* 8. *cap.* 5. Plutarch *in Moral.*

gerous is delaying Sloth? The Virgins deferring, provokes Christ to denying. *Archias* being merry at supper, had a letter sent him that concern'd his life, and though desired to read it, puts it up into his pocket, saying, *περὶ ἀυριον τὰ σπουδαῖα*, I'll mind serious things to morrow, but he lived not unto the morrow, to mind those serious things. Such another sluggard was the rich man, *Luke* 12. 20. *Stulte hac nocte. Tolle moras: semper nocuit differre paratis. Alexander* being asked how he came to conquer the World, replied, *Nunquam differre volens*; if you will overcome more than *Alexander* did, not only the World, but also Satan, and your own flesh, the worst and strongest enemy of all, you must carefully lay hold on every lock of opportunity, and expeditiously improve the same. Plutarch *in Moral.* *Lucan.*

3. Disturbing Sloth is, when a person doth intend and endeavour to walk in Gods way, but Sloth, as rust, hinders the wheels of his Soul from coming to, and running in the way of God. The *Tarpedo* if it touch but any part of the angle that a man holds in his hand, *corpus torpescere facit*, it benums and stupifies all the members that they cannot stir or strive. Such malignant influence hath Sloth upon the Soul; the chariots of Saints Souls should drive, as *Jehu's*, heartily and furiously, 2 *Kings* 9. 20. and not as *Pharaoh's* chariots, heavily and faintly, *Exod.* 14. 25. all the agility of the soul, all the ability of the body, are required in Gods way, and about Gods work; whatsoever comes short of this is Sloth, as whatsoever comes short of Virtue is Vice. Plin. *nat. hist. lib.* 32. *cap.* 1.

2. Activity in duty is a victorious conquest over the Great *Goliah* Sloth, and riding triumph in the way, work, and worship of God; activity is as *David's* dancing before the Ark with all his might; there are three things which concur and contribute to complete this activity in duty.

1. *Tota animi intentio.*
2. *Inexplebilis cupiditas agendi*
3. *Assiduitas in actione.*

Basil *in reg. Brev. resp.* 259.

1. A streining and stretching of the soul to the utmost peg, and highest pin, a putting of it upon the tenter-hooks in service.

2. An unsatiable and unsatisfiable desire or longing for the effecting and accomplishing of a duty.

3. A constant and continual waiting and working until the duty be perfected; take these three exactly shadowed out in *Archimedes*; * he was drawing his Mathematical lines when *Marcellus* entred the gates of *Syracuse*; yea when the Souldiers entred his Study, that he never minded them; there was the intention of his mind; when the Souldiers pull'd him by the sleeve, he cries out, let me alone to finish my Scheme; there was his inexpleble desire of perfecting it; when the Souldiers drew their swords to run him thorow, he yet plyed his business; there was his assiduity in his action; here was *Hoc age* indeed. Oh what a shame would it be for us Christians, if a Heathen in his way should out-go, and out-do us in Gods way. Stupendious was the activity of the *Jewish* Priests about their Sacrifices when their enemies were broke in upon them. I shall commend two Texts of Scripture to you, which do most lively ob im- * Plutarch *in vit. ejus.* Joseph *de. bel. Jud.*

brate tepedity, and fervidity, *Rom.* 12. 11, 12, *Not ſlothful in buſineſs, fervent in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord.* τῷ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηρῷ. *In feſtinatione non lenti*, here *feſtinalente* is out of doors. We muſt fly as upon the wings of the wind; our heart muſt be like the *Primum Mobile*, to wheel and whirl us about with a moſt rapid motion; fervent in ſpirit, boyling or burning hot, all on fire and flame, ſerving the Lord, continuing inſtant in Prayer, ſtrenuouſly and ſtedfaſtly wreſtling with God, as *Jacob* did, who as a *Prince* had power with God, *Hoſ.* 12. 3. this is that *Ultimum virium* which is expected, and only reſpected of God; God accounts nothing elſe Prayer but this, *Iſa.* 64. 7, *And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee*, i. e. with that Faith and fortitude to hold Gods hands, as *Moſes*, *Jacob*, and others did; the Cock is a rare Emblem of this activity, who raiſes, and rowſes himſelf, claps his wings, and then crows with all his might, *Heb.* 6. 11. 12, *We deſire that every one of you do ſhew the ſame diligence*, verſ. 12. *That you be not ſlothful*, not of a ſlow pace, to want fire, yea and feet too, that not run in Gods way. *Non amo nimium diligentes*, was the ſaying of a Heathen; but God will never ſay ſo, becauſe we can never be too diligent and devout in his ſervice; and ſurely if *Jacob* did ſerve *Laban toto conatu*, Gen. 31. 6, *with all my power have I ſerved your Father*; then much more ſhould we with all our induſtry and endeavour ſerve our Father.

πρὸς καρτερῦντες aſſidue operam navantes.

Cafide & fiducia, ut Dei manus teneat. A Lap. *in Loc.*

νωθρὸν. ἐκ τοῦ θεῷ non curro. Signis, quaſi ſe ignis, ſine igne.

Thy way, by way of Emphaſis, in oppoſition to, and exaltation of, above all other ways.

There is a four-fold way.

1. *Via Mundi*, the way of the World, and that is *ſpinoſa*, thorny.
2. *Via carnis*, the way of the Fleſh, and that is *inſidioſa*, treacherous.
3. *Via Satanæ*, the way of the Devil, and that is *tenebricoſa*, darkſome.
4. *Via Domini*, the way of God, and that is *gratioſa*, gracious.

This way is two-fold.

1. *Via velata*, a concealed way, and that is of his Privy Counſels.
2. *Via revelata*, a revealed way, and that is of his publick Commands.

1. *Via beneplaciti* of his Privy Counſels, *Rom.* 11. 33, *How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out!* He that ſhall go about to ſeek and ſearch for that way, muſt return a *Non eſt inventa*, and ſhall prove himſelf a true *Ignoramus*, verſ. 34, *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? And who hath been his Counſellor?* the beſt of mortals were never honoured with that title, to be one of Gods Privy Councellors.

2. *Via ſigni*, of his publick and common road of Commandments, Pſa. 119. 1, *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way: Who walk in the way of the Lord.* v. 27, *Make me to underſtand the way of thy Precepts*, Iſa. 2. 3, *He will teach Sions Scholars of his ways, and they will walk in his paths.* Iſa. 30. 21, *Thine ears ſhall hear a voice behind thee, ſaying, this is the way, walk ye in it.*

τὰ ἀκρυβιζόμενα, ὐ δεῖ ζητεῖν, ὐ δὲ τὰ δεδηλωμένα παντελῶς ἀγνοεῖν, Theod. *dial.* 1.

We muſt not be ſo impudent as to deſire to walk in the way of his Privy Counſels, nor ſo imprudent as not to walk in the ways of his publick Commands.

The

The ſecret things belong to the Lord our God: But thoſe things which are revealed, belong to us, and to our children for ever, that they may do all the works of this Law *Deut.* 29. 29. Having thus plained my way to the Text, or rather explained the way in my Text, I proceed to the deduction of a Corollary, or Concluſion from the words, which is the ſecond thing I premiſed and promiſed.

Doctr

Every Saint is very apt to be a ſlug in the way and work of God. *Quicken me* (ſays one of the cheifeſt and choiceſt of Saints) *in thy way*; and it is as much as if he ſhould ſay in plain terms, Ah Lord, I am a dull Jade, and have often need of thy Spur, thy Spirit; This Prayer of *David* ſeems proof enough to this point; but if you deſire farther confirmation. I ſhall produce an argument, *inſtar omnium*, that none ſhall dare to deny, nor be able to diſapprove, and that is drawn from the topick of your own experience, and this is *argumentum lugubre*, like a Funeral Anthem, very ſad and ſorrowful. Do you not feel, and find, to the grief of your own ſouls, that whereas you ſhould weep as if you wept not, rejoyce as if you rejoyced not, and buy as if you poſſeſſed not; *Inverſo ordine*, you weep for loſſes as if you would weep out your eyes; you rejoyce in temporal comforts as if you were in heaven; and you buy as if it were for ever and a day, *Pſal.* 49. 11. But *è contrario*, You pray as if you prayed not, hear as if you heard not, work for God as if you worked not. Now we know *experto credas** a man that ſticks faſt in a ditch needs no reaſons to prove he is in, but remedies to pull him out. Your beſt courſe will be to propoſe the caſe how you may get rid of this unwelcom gueſt, ſpiritual ſloth; it is a caſe we are all concerned in, *Aſini aures quis non habet*; Every man and mortal hath ſome of the Aſſes dulneſs and ſloth in him; and therefore I have brought a whip of ten ſtrings to ſcourge this ſloth and dulneſs out of us.

1. Keep a ſtrict watch over your eyes at all times, eſpecially when you are in duty; the eyes are the Port-holes that Sin and Satan creep in at; it is accounted a great piece of charity to a mans body to cloſe his eyes when he is dead: I am ſure it is more charity to our ſouls to cloſe our own eyes whilſt we are living. See what a ſtrict guard *Job* keeps upon his eyes, that would not permit them at any time to view vain or wanton Objects, *Job* 31. 1, *I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I look upon a maid?* And the Prophet ſeems here to imply, that unleſs God would turn away his eyes from beholding vanity, he ſhould never be quickned in his way; It is *removere prohibens*, beholding vanity forbids the banes between the ſoul and quickning. If you will keep your houſes warm, you muſt keep your doors ſhut: If you will keep your hearts hot in a duty, you muſt keep your eyes ſhut. If thoſe doors ſtand wide open for all comers and goers, either your ſoul, *Dinah* like, will be gadding out, or Satan will be getting in, by which the poor ſoul will be defiled and deflowred.

2. Send ſin packing bag and baggage; theſe two mutually generate one the other,

Natur me genuit, eadem mox gignitur ex me. Sin begets ſloth, and

*Cogita quomodo huc me liberesnon quomodo huc cecideris quæras. Aug. Epiſt. 29.

Eheul quot ὄνους habit ſanctus David, vel potius ſpiritus ſanctus ad ſuam Cytharam. Par. ἐν τῇ ὀφῦν γενέσθαι τὸ ἔργον. Iſa. 57, 8. & ult. Apperuit nobis in Paradiſo oculos ſatan. nunc omnis labor in eo nobis eſt, ut eos iterum claudamus & obturemus. Luther. Ridiculum eſt quod quidam reſpondent ſe ſpectaculis non moveri. quid si an ferrei. an ſaxei. An Adamantini ſunt. an ſapientiores, fortiores ſanctioris quam David, Chryſ. in Pſal. 51. Nom. 1. Ægris corporibus ſimillima eſt ægritudo animi. Cic. de fin. 73.

ſloth begets ſin: Sloth in *David* made him ſinful, and ſin in *David* made him ſlothful. Sin is the ſouls ſickneſs; now ſickneſs makes men lazy, lither, loath to ſtir. There is a diſeaſe incident to mans body, called the Lethargy, which makes him drowſie, ſleepy negligent, and forgetful; it ſprings from a cold Cathar of a pitchy and glutinous nature, which cools and benums the brain; Sloth is the Souls Lethargy, which makes it ſluggiſh, negligent, forgetful, this ariſes from the Cathar of ſin, benumming and ſtupifying the heart; and of all ſins, turn Covetouſneſs out of doors.

Aurugo, ab aureo colore, ut Med. *Scythians* ſmothered their Gods in the duſt, Chriſtians bury their godlineſs in the dunghil.

There is a diſeaſe in the body, called the yellow Jaundice, which makes the perſon look yellow all over; this ſprings from the overflowing of the gall, which over-ſpreading the whole man, makes it liveleſs, liſtleſs: Covetouſneſs is the yellow Jaundice of the ſoul, which ariſes from the over-flowing of the heart with love to yellow gold, by which a Chriſtian is dull'd and deadned. Thruſt a Knife into the earth, and it takes away the edge; throw earth upon the fire, and it deadens the heat; let but earthly mindedneſs creep into the heart, it takes off the edge, and deadens the heat of it to, or in any exerciſ of Religion. *Solomon* calls it an evil diſeaſe *Eccleſ.* 6. 2. indeed the worſt of diſeaſes, a complicated diſeaſe; this diſeaſe does not only dead, but deſtroy the ſoul, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, Drowns men in perdition, *Ver.* 10. *The love of money is the root of all evil.* The birth of money is the burial of the mind; therefore our Saviour, *Luk.* 12. 15, bids us *take heed and beware of Covetouſneſs:* A double Caution that we might have a double care. Above all keepings, keep Covetouſneſs out of thy heart, *Prov.* 4. 23, for that will not only hinder thee from being active in duty, but help thee to be active againſt duty. The Phariſees who were covetous, derided him, *Luk.* 6. 14. They that drink of the water of the River *Hipanis*, at firſt are delighted with it, but afterward are ſo hurt by it, that *non injuria execrantur.* It is moſt true of *Chryſorroas* the yellow River, at firſt draught it pleaſes, but afterward it makes them ſo dead drunk, that they become Dormice for ever after.

Fœnus pecuniæ, funus animæ. Leoc.

Solinus, c. 14

3. Frequent a quickning Miniſtry, *Ver* 50, *Thy Word hath quickned me.* The Word of God is quick and powerful, *Heb.* 4. 12, living and operative, not only *formaliter*, and in it ſelf, but alſo *virtualiter*; in the vertue and efficacy of it, it makes men lively in their operation. *Acts.* 7. 38, λογια ζωντα, Oracles making lively, *Jer.* 5. 14, *I will make my words in thy mouth fire.* Fire, as it is the moſt noble, ſo it is the moſt active Element, and makes other things active. Creatures almoſt dead for cold, brought to the fire, are made active and nimble: Witneſs *Æſops* Snake which the Countryman brought in his hand, but when it had received heat from the fire, it diſturbed the whole houſe. Dr. *Ames* relates, that there was once ſuch cold Preaching in *Paris*, that the Proteſtants were conſtrained to go into the Country to a godly Miniſter to be warmed; A godly Miniſter will warm a cold heart, and put quickneſs into a drowſie ſpirit.

Ζωην ἐνεργῆς.

Ignus animantibus vim dat mirificam. Varro.

4. Make out to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe Promiſe and Office it is to make us active and vivacious, *Joh.* 10. 10, *I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly.* Chriſt came not only to make us alive, but alſo to make us lively. Perſons who are ſloathful by reaſon

reaſon of cold ſtiffening their joynts, make out to the Mineral and Metalline baths which heal and help them: The blood of Chriſt is the moſt precious mineral hot bath in the world, it will doubtleſs cure and quicken all cold and dull ſouls that come into it, *Zech.* 13. 1. It is the Fountain opened for ſin and for uncleanneſs. Sloth, it is a very foul ſin, and filthy uncleanneſs, *Joh.* 1. 7, *And the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.* The ſin of Sloth, which in ſome ſenſe may be called all ſin, it being *Pulvinar ſatanæ*, the devils pillow that he layes his head on in the ſoul, *Pet.* 2. 4. 5. Come to Chriſt the living Stone, and you ſhall come from Chriſt lively Stones.

Anima dat vitam & vivacitatem corpori, Chriſtus dat vitam & vivacitatem animæ.

5. Get quickening love to the ways of God.

Qui non vult fieri deſidioſus, amet. *Ovid* lib. 1. Amor 9.

Pliny tells us, That a rod of Myrtle in the hand of a Traveller, will never ſuffer him to flag or faint, but keeps him freſh and lively to his journeys end. I am ſure where love is in the heart, it will carry a man in the way of God with life. The Apoſtles did triumph in their tribulations; and how ſo? *Becauſe the love of God is ſhed abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghoſt, which is given unto us*, *Rom.* 5. 5. *Orig.* is plentifully poured out as wine into bottles, which makes it ſpiritful. Love turns all pains into pleaſures, and perils into perfumes. Love is the fore-horſe in the ſouls Chariot, who draws all the other affections and faculties after him: what a loadſtone was *Shechems* love to *Dinah*, *Gen.* 34. 19? It makes him communicate his wealth, change his Religion, circumcize his fore-skin. See how ſpiritual Love wrought in *Paul*, it was as ſtrong Phyſick, ready to work out his bowels, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *For the love of God conſtraineth us*; Love hath not only an impulſive, but alſo a compulſive power, *συνέχει*: Love is a grace that is always big-bellied, and is in labour, always being delivered of ſome good duty or other. This Love put *Paul* upon exceeding pains, and exceſſive perils.

Omnis animæ motus radix eſt amor. Pariſ.

Ubi amor eſt non eſt labor, ſed ſapor. Bern. Serm. 85. in Cant.

Si tantum potuit cupiditas, quid potuit charitas? Aug. *Metaphora à parturientibus ſumpta.* Grot.

1. Exceeding pains that never meer man took the like, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10, *I laboured more abundantly than they all*; It muſt be great pains to preach the goſpel fully from *Jeruſalem* round about to *Illyricum*. Rom. 15. 10. *ἐν κύκλῳ in circulo*, or *circuitu*, making *Jeruſalem* the Point, and the Regions round about the Circumference, and then the ſpace could not be leſs than four thouſand Miles: But if you take it in a collateral Line, taking in the Regions of *Attica*, *Bœotia*, *Achaia*, *Epirus*, *Aſia minor Cilicia*, *Cappadocia*, &c. it was 2000 Miles; but if you take it in a direct Line from *Jeruſalem* to *Stridon*, a Town in *Illyricum*, it was above a thouſand Miles, and though theſe tireſome journeys might have apologized for ſparing, or at leaſt for curtailing duties; yet *Paul* never meaſured out his pains by a few ſands in a glaſs, but ſpent much time among the Saints in Praying, Preaching, Diſputing. Very memorable is that pains of his *Acts* 20. 7, where *Paul* ſpends all the time from the Diſciples meeting together on the Lords day, until midnight, in holy Exerciſes.

Beza.

3. His exceſſive perils; what a large Catalogue have you of them,

2 *Cor.*

2 *Cor.* 11. 23, *and* 28, *In ſtripes above meaſure: In priſons more frequent: In deaths oft: of the Jews five times received I forty ſtripes ſave one. Thrice was I beaten with rods: Once was I ſtoned: Thrice I ſuffered ſhipwrack: A night and a day I have been in the deep: In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by my own Countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the wilderneſs, in perils in the Sea, in perils among falſe brethren; in wearineſs, and painfulneſs; in watchings often, in hunger and thirſt, in faſtings often, in cold and nakedneſs*; All this laid together, well may we ſay with him, * There was never a more fierce perſecutor of the Goſpel, nor a more fervid propagator of the Goſpel; The firſt proceeded from his hatred againſt Chriſt, the laſt proceeded from his love to Chriſt.

* *Nemo acrior inter perſecutores, nemo prior inter peccatores.* Aug. Tom. 10. pag. 202.

6. By faith apply the quickening Promiſes, and the Promiſes of quickning.

1. The quickning Promiſes; Promiſes are ſteel-ſpurs that will reach the dull heart to the quick; they are ſingular Plaiſters, if well applied, to draw out the corruption of ſloth; they are the ſovereign *Elixers* whoſe quinteſſence will make the ſoul full of ſpirits, 2 *Pet* 1. 4. *Whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe ye might be partakers of the Divine Nature.* Precious Promiſes, as ſtones, are precious, which have egregious vertue in them, that by them we might be made partakers of the Divine Nature; not of the ſubſtance of God, as *Servetus* ſtubbornly defended even to death; But of thoſe divine qualities and gracious diſpoſitions, which will ſtand with Gods Nature to communicate, and our nature to participate. Now Gods Divine Nature is an Act, and our Divine Nature is active: Now the right applying promiſes will be very vertuous to make us vigorous to come as nigh the image and life of God as poſſibly we can. *Plato* ſayes, it is our cheifeſt good, *Deo penitus conformem fieri*, to bear the Character of God upon us.

Cardan. ſubſt. l. 7.

Bez. in loc. *Non transformatione naturæ humanæ in divinam, ſed participatione donorum quibus conformes divinæ naturæ ſimus.* Par.

2. The Promiſes of quickning. *David* preſſes God to be as good as his word, *Pſal.* 119. 25. *Quicken thou me according to thy word*; He is often upon this ſtring, *Ver.* 107. 154, reſolving not to let God alone until he kept his word, *Iſa.* 40. 31. *But they that wait upon the Lord ſhall renew their ſtrength, they ſhall mount up with wings as Eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall walk and not faint.* Our ſoul, as a Bee, muſt ſuck honey from this flower to quicken it ſelf. Say thus to thy ſelf: Soul, God hath Promiſed I ſhall mount up with Eagles wings, fly through difficulties and duties with celerity; he is a God able, true, willing, therefore I may be aſſured of this aſſiſtance. Oh this honey will enliven thee more than *Jonathans* honey enlightned him, 1 *Sam.* 14. 26, 29, Who muſt dye becauſe he had eaten honey; and if he had not eaten honey, he muſt have died.

Coimus in cælum ut deum quaſi manufacta precationibus ambiamus orantes, hæc vis deo grata. Tertul. *ad.* 39.

Διώκω more venatorum perſequentium feram Aret. *Ignatius* Epiſt. *ad* Rom.

7. Mind quickning examples. A dull Jade will put himſelf faſter on when he ſees other horſes gallop before him. The Apoſtle having muſtered up in rank and file the Examples of thoſe famous Worthies, *Heb.* 11, does *Heb.* 12. 1, excite them with patience to run the race that was ſet before them. If the rare acts of *Miltiades* would not ſuffer *Themiſtocles* to

ſleep,

ſleep then the famous Actions of Gods Worthies ſhould not ſuffer us to ſlumber. View *Elias* how he went up in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his ſpirit, before he went in a fiery Chariot to heaven in his perſon, *James* 5. 17. Eye *Paul* how induſtriouſly and indefatigably he purſues, even as a Beagle his chaſe with full cry, and all celerity, *Phil.* 3. 10. *ad* 15. Obſerve *Ignatius* how he goes to the beaſts to be devoured, as if he had gone to a Bridal to be married. Laſtly, Slight not the Martyrs in Q. *Maries* daies, who went to the fire as if they had been going to a bone-fire. *Seeſt thou this woman* (ſaith our Saviour to *Simon*, of *Mary Magdalen*) *with what activity and affection ſhe hath waſhed and wiped my feet*, (her tears being the water, her hair the towel) *let it provoke thee to more diligence and devotion*, *Luk.* 7. 44, 45. Examples are pricking and provoking goads to quicken us: fires to light our candles by, to heat our bodies with.

En amo te, & hoc parum eſt, amem validius, Aug. lib. *de* Med. c. 18.

8. Keep quickning company, As bad company is Water to quench, ſo good company is oyl to quicken fervour; As Iron ſharpens Iron, ſo one gracious heart ſets an edge upon another, *Prov.* 27. 17. Holy Companions are bellows, ἀναζωπυρεῖν, to blow up, and make burn the graces that lye in embers, 2 *Tim.* 1. 16. The gracious affections of Saints are called beds of ſpices, *Cant.* 6. 2. Holy conference of holy company is the rubbing and chafing thoſe ſpices to make them ſent and ſend forth their perfumes: *Alexander* where ever he came, perfumed the Room with his preſence; ſo does every believer with his ſpeeches. *David* who deſires quicknings, picks out quickning company, *I am a companion of all them* (rich or poor) *that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts*, Pſal. 119. 63. *Paul* is preſſed in ſpirit by the company and conference of *Silas* and *Timotheus*, Acts 18. 5. the two Diſciples hearts burn'd within them in their journey to *Emaus*, by that ſweet diſcourſe they had with Chriſt, *Luke* 4. 32.

Bonus comes pro vehiculo,

9. Conſider quickning conſiderations. They that are apt to faint and tire in a journey, carry about their bottles of water to quicken their ſpirits; let theſe ten conſiderations be ſuch bottles to you when you tire in the journey of a duty.

I. Conſider how odious and abominable Sloth is to man, or God; the *Romans* judged ſloth and idleneſs worthy of the greateſt contempt. *Aſinus ad lyram*, *Aſinus ad tibiam*, are Proverbs of the greateſt deriſion and diſgrace: how contemptibly does *Jacob* ſpeak of *Iſſachar*, *a ſtrong Aſs couching down between two burthens*, Gen. 49. 14, 15. yea God himſelf refuſes the firſt-born of an Aſs in Sacrifice, *Exod.* 13. 13. *Bellarmin* gives this reaſon, becauſe it was *animal tardigradum*, a ſlow paced and ſluggiſh creature, which God hates; God being a pure act, loves pure activity. Oh what thunder-claps and cracks of threatnings may you hear from the Mount *Ebal* of his Word, able to make the moſt ſluggiſh *Caligula* to creep under his bed for ſhelter. *Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, Jer. 48. 10. *Curſed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing*, Mal. 1. 14. God threatens to remove the candleſtick from the Church of *Epheſus*, becauſe ſhe was grown remiſs in her firſt love, *Rev.* 2. 5. 6. he terrifies the Church of *Laodicea* with the menace of ſpuing her out of his mouth for her lukewarmneſs; the ſervant

Zon. *Annal.* l. 2. Peir. 87. d. l. 3. *cap.* 16. *Enervos animos odiſſe virtus ſolet* Val. Max. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 7. *tardis mentibus virtus non facile commitetur.* Tuſt *quæſt. tib.* 5.

vant who had not returned *Cent. per Cent.* for his talent, is called wicked and ſlothful ſervant, and caſt into the darkeſt dungeon, *Matth.* 25. 16, 30, how would this conſideration well conſidered on, cauſe all ſlothful ſervants ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble?

II. Conſider, ſloth expoſes you to all manner of ſin, eſpecially theſe two deſperate and dangerous ones.

1. Sordid Apoſtacy.

2. Spiritual Adultery.

I. Sordid Apoſtacy. Sloth in the Soul is like the Green Sickneſs in the body of a Virgin, which makes her not only fall from her colour, ſtrength, ſtomach to wholſom food, but alſo to long and luſt after traſh and trumpery, coles, ſoot, aſhes: the *Galathians* becauſe they were ἀνόητοι, without mind and metal, do therefore prove Apoſtates, beginning in the Spirit, ending in the fleſh, *Gal.* 3. 13. * falling off from fervour, will turn to falling away to folly. The ſlothful man will not bring his hand to his mouth, *Prov.* 19. 24. it is expounded of a ſlothful Miniſter, who will not bring *voci ſuæ vitam ſuam*, his works to his words; though this be an undoubted truth of lazy and ſlothful Miniſters, yet the Proverb holds true of all ſluggards tendency to falling away in their hand from their mouth, *i.e.* from what they have formerly profeſſed. Conſider how great and grievous a ſin Apoſtacy is; it was the firſt ſin that ever was committed; it was the ſin of the Devils, for which they were caſt out of Heaven, and caſt down into Hell, *Heb.* 10. 38, *if any man draw back, my Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in him*; a metaphor taken from a ſluggiſh Jade, who finding the load come heavy, draws back again; the backſlider in heart, much more in hand, from Gods way, ſhall be fill'd with his own wayes, *Prov.* 14. 14. *i. e.* he hath run away from his Captain, Colours, Cauſe, and he ſhall have Marſhal-Law for it; it will be worth my pains and your patience, to give an inſtance what ſevere Martial-Law God hath excuted on all Runnagadoes and Revolters.

* *Tepiditas ſi callum obduxerit fiet Apoſtaſia.* Greg. *Moral. lib.* 22. *cap.* 5.

1. Miniſters. *Judas* who revolted from his Maſter and Miniſtrie, turning from being a guard to his Saviour, to be a guide to the Souldiers, *Acts* 1. 17, afterward hanged himſelf, his bowels burſt out of his belly, and ſo he took his proper and peculiar place in Hell, *v.* 18. 25. *John Speiſer* Preacher at *Ainsborough* in *Germany*, who preached ſo profitably and powerfully that the common ſtrumpets left the Brothelhouſes then tolerated, and betook themſelves to a better courſe, *Anno* 1543, yet afterward revolting to the Papiſts, he periſhed miſerably.

Scult. *annal*, 118.

2. People. *Remember Lots wife*, Luke 17. 32, who turning back to *Sodom*, was turned into a pillar of ſalt, to ſeaſon us, that we may be preſerved from the ſtinking ſin of Apoſtacy. *Lucian* a great Profeſſor in the daies of *Trajan*, but revolting, was torn in pieces, and devoured of Dogs. The Emperour *Julian* the Apoſtate was wounded with an arrow, none knowing from whence, in his War againſt the *Perſians*, who throwing his blood up to Heaven, died, ſcornfully crying, *Viciſti Galileæ, viciſti.*

Joſeph. *Antiq. l.* 1. *c.* 12. *Ut condimentum ſit aliis.* Aug. *lib.* 16. *de Civ. Dei, c.* 30.

II. Spiritual Adultery. Bodily ſloth expoſes to corporal Adultery. *Quæriter Ægiſthus.*

David

Davids instance clears it sufficiently, 2 *Sam.* 11. 2. Spiritual sloth exposes to Spiritual adultery, *Rom.* 1. 21, 23, *When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.* What follows upon this sloth in not glorifying God as he ought to be glorified? *v.* 23, *They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.* Sloth is the high-way to Superstition, and Idleness the road-way to Idolatry, 1 *Cor.* 10. 7, *Neither be you Idolaters, as were some of them, as it is written, the people sate down to eat, and drink, and rose up to play*: by which is implied, their Idleness was the cause of their Idolatry. When * *Demas* grew lazy and slothful in his Ministry, he turned Priest in an Idols Temple, where he had less work and more wages, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10; consider idolatry and superstition are God-provoking, Land-destroying, Soul-damning sins; no wonder *John* should conclude his Epistle with, *Keep your selves from Idols*, 1 Joh. 5. 21.

* *Dorotheus in Synop. adeo primitive est ex servo Mammonæ transire in sacerdotem diaboli.* Dr. *Arrowsmith*, Tract. Sacr. *Gravissimum peccatum Aqui. 2a, 2æ. quæst. 94. Art. 3, Principa è crimen, & summus hujus sæculi reatus.* Tert. *Omnis qui ad paradisum redire desiderat, oportet transire per ignem & aquam.* Aug. *in Serm. ad Lipp.*

III. Consider how impossible it is, that creeping Snails in Gods way should ever get to their journeys end; fair and softly goes far, but never so far as Heaven, *Mat.* 11. 12, *The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*, * ἁρπάζουσιν, a Metaphor taken from storming Cities and Castles: they storm Heaven, hang their Petarhs of Prayers on Heaven-gates and blow them open, that get Heaven by a conquest; storming is not work either for the fearful or the slothful, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24, *So run that you may obtain*; not creep, but run; not run, but so run; not indifferently, but industriously, as the racers in the *Isthmian* Games (to which the Apostle here alludes) who did stretch and strein their legs and limbs that they might gain the prize, *Luk.* 13. 24, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate:* Heaven hath a very strait gate, we must crowd, yea crush our selvs if ever we get in, ἀγωνίζεσθε, play the Champions to a very agony, *for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able*, ζητήσουσιν, shall seek with industry and endeavour.

* Brugens. *Non dormientibus provenit regnum cælorum, nec otio & desidia torpentibus beatitudo æternitate ingeritur.* Prosp. *de vit. contemp. Qui stadium currit, eniti debet, & contendere quam maxime possit ut vincat.* Tul. 3. Off. *Petent cum ardore. Humanum quiddam dico* Eras. *Sicut non qualitatis sed æqualitatis. Cyprian* was πολὺς ἐν ἀσεβείᾳ πλείων ἐν εὐσεβείᾳ. Naz. *Orat.* 18.

IV. Consider how equitable it is that you should be as active in the way of God, as you were once in the way of sin and Satan, *Rom.* 6. 19, *I speak after the manner of men*, i.e. I speak Reason as well as Religion; *as you have yielded your members servants unto uncleanness, and to iniquity unto iniquity. As*, not of quality but equality, *even so now yield your members servants to righteousness, unto holiness*; even so, in the same manner, and the same measure: this very consideration wrought effectually upon *Paul* himself, who as he had formerly sinned more than all, so afterwards he laboured more than all; the time he could not recover by recalling, he does recover by redeeming. What a piercing, and prevailing spur would this be to a dull and sluggish soul. Ah soul, what a shame, what a sin is this, to be a slow snail in the way of God, that hast been a swift Dromedary in the way of sin.

V. Consider how you contradict your own prayers, your very *Pater Noster*, wherein you desire Gods will should be so done by you on

earth, as it is done by the Angels in Heaven; now thoſe winged *Mercuries* and meſſengers of Heaven do ſpeedily and ſpritefully execute the Commandments of God, *Pſal.* 113. 20, *Bleſs the Lord ye his Angels which excel in ſtrength, that do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word*; Theſe heavenly Purſevants ſtand liſtening to know their Princes Royal pleaſure, and then they go to execute it.

Angelos πορθμεύοντας τὰ τῶν θεῶν πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, καὶ τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς *eſſe putat* Plutarch.

1. With all celerity and ſpeed: they are ſaid to have wings, *Iſa.* 6. 2. which are the Emblems of velocity, *ver.* 6, the Seraphim came flying to *Iſaiah* with a coal from the Altar. *Gabriel* is ſent poſt from Heaven, *Dan.* 9. 21, being cauſed to fly ſwiftly, in extraordinary haſte, that he ſeemed weary and tyred; the Angels flying upon Gods embaſſy is always very ſwift: the School-men make a doubt whether they do *ab extremo ad extremum tranſire*; yet it ſeems they can mend their pace in their flight from Heaven to Earth, and ſo back again, which is (as thoſe wiſe Aſtronomers, who have been there to meaſure it) backward and forward above one hundred and ſixty millions of miles.

Clavius *in Sphæram.*

2. With ardency and intenſeneſs they are called *Seraphs*: Iſa. 6. 2. *Igniti*, fiery, yea, a flame of fire, *Heb.* 1. 7. *Elijahs* chariot and horſes of fire, were Angels appearing in thoſe forms, 2 *King.* 3. 11. of all the Elements fire is the moſt intenſe and active, the mouth of fire devours and deſtroys all that comes before it; many of the Heathens did worſhip fire for their god, becauſe it devoured all their other gods; theſe fiery Hoſts of God are very devouring; one of them in one night deſtroyed a hundred fourſcore and five thouſand *Aſſyrians*, 2 Kings 10. 35.

3. With alacrity and chearfulneſs; it is a great part of their joy in Heaven, that they do Gods ſervice with joy; as ſoon as ever they were created, they rejoyced that they ſhould be employed in ſuch honourable ſervice, *Job* 38. 7, *When the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy*; how chearfully did the Angels bring tidings of Chriſts birth to the World, as appears by their praiſing God to the higheſt of their power, *Luke* 2. 14, *Glory be to God in the higheſt*, &c. ſurely if you conſider Angels worſhip, and doing Gods will, it will make you leave off your ſloth, or your ſervice; either cauſe you to pray better, or not to pray at all.

VI. Conſider, you loſe the very ſoul and life of your duty, if you do not perform it as for your life and ſoul. You come to ſeek and ſee the face of God in the glaſs of Ordinances, *Pſal.* 27. 8, to have communion with him, to fetch comfort from him; to get ſome kiſſes of him, *Cant.* 1. 3, to mortifie ſome luſt, to increaſe ſome grace, to ſtrengthen your aſſurance, to teſtifie your duty, to expreſs your affection, &c. now ſpiritual ſloth hinders you of all this; dull and drowſie eyes cannot ſee God, heavy and ſlothful hearts cannot receive thoſe benefits and bleſſings from God. Sloth is a ſluce-gate to the current of Gods grace and favour. *Jupiter* rained a ſhower of gold into *Diana's* lap, but God will never rain a ſhower of grace, joy and comfort into a ſluggards heart. If you loſe the bleſſed ſight of God here in Ordinances, you ſhall loſe the beatifical ſight of God hereafter in Glory, 2 *Cor.* 3. 18.

Lambunt petram, mel non ſugunt. Cyp. *de Can. dom.*

Torpor non ſinit Deum eſſe beneficium.

But

But we all with open face beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord; then have we the kernel of a duty (every thing elſe is but a ſhell) when our employment is on Earth, and our enjoyment in Heaven; when we have ſo ſought Gods Face, that our face comes away ſhining; and we have ſo poured out our hearts to God, that God hath poured out his heart to us, that we return home like Bees loaded with honey, filled with the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt.

VII. Conſider the infinite and wonderful Glory, Greatneſs, Majeſty of him you appear before and approach unto in your duties. A God you are not able to conceive, nor I to expreſs. See how the Scripture ſhadows him out unto us (and indeed it is but a ſhadow in compariſon of his ſubſtance) *Iſa.* 40. 12, *Who hath meaſured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out Heaven with a ſpan, and comprehended the duſt of the earth in a meaſure, and weighed the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in a balance?* v. 15. *Behold the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance: behold he taketh up the Iſles as a very little thing.* v. 16, *And Lebanon is not ſufficient to burn, nor the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt offering.* v. 17. *All things before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him leſs than nothing and vanity. Ex pede Herculis.* By this glorious deſcription we may gueſs (and that is all) at enough in God to ſcare us from coming to God in a dull and drowſie manner: the Heathens who worſhip'd the Sun for their god, durſt not offer up any thing but a flying horſe to him in ſacrifice; our God is more glorious, ſwift-ſeeing, than ten thouſand Suns, therefore we ſhould not dare to offer up any thing but a winged Cherubim, or ſwift flying Eagle to him in ſervice.

Quæ participatione nobis veneranda ſunt, in comparatione ejus memoranda non ſunt. Greg. *Moc.l.*18.*c.*27

VIII. Conſider how induſtrious and indefatigable an adverſary you have that lies always in ambuſh to wrong you, yea to ruin you. Satan is the unwearied Peripatetick, who walks up and down for prey and ſpoil, *Job* 1. 7. now the dull ſoul is his prey; a ſlug Ship is a purchaſe for the Pyrat, and a ſluggiſh ſoul for the Devil; it is holy and wholeſome advice given by *Peter*, chap. 1. 5, 8, *Be ſober, be vigilant; becauſe your adverſary the Devil as a roaring Lion, walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour*; the Devil (ſays pious and plain *Latimer*) is the moſt diligent Biſhop in *England*, he is ever at his Plough: no Lording nor loitering may hinder him; his office is to hinder Religion, to maintain Superſtition, to ſet up Idolatry, to teach all kind of Popery; where his Plough goes, there away with Books, and up with Candles; away with Bibles, and up with Beads; away with the light of the Goſpel, and up with the light of Candles, yea at noon-days. How ſhould this quicken us to be active for God and our ſoul, that have an enemy ſo active always againſt God and our ſoul. You need not quicken a Mariner to make out all the Cloth he can, that knows a Pyrat hath him in chaſe at ſtern; *timor addidit alas*, fear will ſpread the ſails which are the wings of the Ship: the Devil the great Pyrat of Souls to make prize and pillage of us and our Graces, hath us in daily purſuit, how careful ſhould we be to fill the

Mr. *Hugh Latimer*'s Sermon preached in the ſhrouds at *Pauls* Church in *London*, *Jan.* 18. *an.* 1548. of the Plough *pag.* 21.

Prius conditionem, complexionem uniuſcujuſq; perſpicit, & tumentationis laqueos apponit. Greg. *Mor. lib.* 9. μυκτηριζειν *cum naſo ludere.* Calv. *Natus deriſioni dicatus.* Pliny.

ſails of our ſouls with the ſtrong gales of the Spirit, that he may neither overtake, nor take us.

IX. Conſider when you ſlothfully and ſluggiſhly perform duties, you do but mock God, *Gal.* 6. 7, *God is not mocked*, i. e. God will not have his noſe played with.

God is mocked three ways.

1. Directly when men by deriding ſpeeches mock the Eſſentiality, or Perſonality of the Godhead. As,

1. The Eſſentiality, when a blaſphemous *Quaker* ſhall ſay God is nothing elſe but the letters read backward, which is, *Horreſco referens.* Or,

2*ly*, The Perſonality. As,

1. God the Father, when he ſhall be called a Cooper hooping his tubs when it thundreth; * or an old man ſitting in heaven, as your common and Country people uſually jeer.

* *Perkins.*

2. God the Son, when *Julian* ſhall gibe him with the Crucified God, or *Libanus* the Carpenters Son; or as Pope * *Leo* the tenth to Cardinal *Bembus*, when he brought a piece out of the Goſpel to comfort him, when ſick, *Away with thoſe forgeries and follies.*

* *Apage iſtas nugas de Chriſto.* Pac. Med. *hiſt. Eccleſ.*

3. God the Holy Ghoſt, when *Securtus* ſhall call him the three-headed *Cerberus*, and ridiculous invention of humane curioſity.

2. Reflexively, when men gibe and jeer the faithful meſſengers of God, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *But they mocked the meſſengers of God*: to mock the meſſengers of God is by reflection to mock the God of thoſe meſſengers. *Cum multis aliis.*

3. Interpretatively, when men do ſuch actions as plainly evidence a mockage of God. I have read of a fellow in want that earneſtly intreated *Mercury* to ſend him ſome relief, promiſing him that whatſoever he found he would ſacrifice half to him: he found nuts, he eat the Kernels and offered the ſhells to *Mercury*, which he reſented as an high affront; activity in duty is the Kernel, ſloth is the ſhell, which we offering to God in ſervice, is interpreted a high and horrid mocking. *Auguſtus Cæſar* being invited to one of his ſubjects houſes, and being ſlothfully and negligently entertained, took it as a deriſion. Duty is an inviting God to our houſe; if we entertain him ſluggiſhly and careleſly, he will call you to an account for your impudent familiarity with him, and make you hold up your hand at his bar for being guilty of taking his name in vain, *Exod.* 20. 7.

Neſciebam me tibi tam fuiſſe familiarem. Eraſm. Adag.

X. Conſider how active Chriſt was in doing us ſervice; he did *omnem movere lapidem*; He was ſo enlarged about the thoughts of doing the work, that he was ſtraitned until he was about it, *Luk.* 12. 50, *I have a baptiſm to be baptized with, and how am I ſtraitned until it be accompliſhed? i. e.* I have a death of the Croſs to ſuffer for Mans Redemption, and I am preſſed with an *Antiperiſtaſis* until I have finiſhed it: Or elſe, as *Grotius* renders it, I am with child of my Paſſion, and how do I long for my delivery. I am in pain until I am in pain; much like ſome women, who breed their Children with more pain than they do bring them forth. When that day of his travel came, it was the day of his triumph, *Col.* 2. 15.

2. 15. *Triumphing over them in it.* The *Athenian Codrus* being informed by the Oracle, That the People, whose King should be slain in the Battel, should be Conquerors, disrobed himself, went into the Enemies Quarters in the habit of a poor man, with a burden on his back, that he might steal a death to make his People Conquerours: Christ disrobed himself of the Garments of Glory, assumed the form of a servant, endured contradictions of sinners, held his peace when falsely charged, that he might steal a death for his People, that so they might be more than Conquerors, *Heb.* 12. 2, *Looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame.* Shall Christ give you such a Copy of activity, and will you blot and blur it with sloth and sluggishness? shall Christ go swiftly to death, and we go sluggishly to duty? Plutarch.

10. Beg the quickning Spirit, this is *instar omnium*, none like it, as *David* said of *Goliah*'s sword. Sloth is the Kings Evil of the soul, and none but the King of Heaven can cure it by his hand, which is his Spirit, *Psal.* 119. 32, *I will run the way of thy Commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Idleness is the souls prison, sloth is her shackle, the spirit of God only can knock off her fetters, and give Goal-delivery to her, *Rom.* 8. 26, *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, of ignorance, dulness, deadness, sluggishness; and enables, yea ennobles us with gracious, copious, filial affections, even *groans and sighs that are unutterable*, expressions not to be expressed. *Cant.* 1. 4, *Draw me, and I will follow thee*; there is her Prayer, and her promise, and there is no doubt of her performance; she will as certainly follow as the Iron the Load-stone, or the Card the North-pole, *Cant.* 4. 16, *Awake, O North wind, and come, O South, blow upon my Garden, that the Spices thereof may flow out.* Awake and come, there is the Prayer, O North and South-wind, there is the Spirit, the Soul that is the Garden, gracious affections they are the Spices that flow out.

But some precious Soul whispers in mine ears, I bless God I am not troubled with this lethargy, my sails are so filled, that my mill goes and grinds nimbly; only I am afraid the wind blows not from the right quarter; pray therefore satisfie my conscience in this case, Whether my activity in duty proceed from the Spirit of God? Quest.

We may easily be deceived by our enlargements, because there are many winds and gales blowing from several quarters, which may set the soul in active going and doing; as popular applause, high opinions of the Preacher, taking expressions in prayer, flourishing novelties and notions in a Sermon, Satanical infusions, common and ordinary inspirations of the Holy Ghost, vouchsafed to reprobates, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. All which, or any of which, may so draw and delight the heart, that (as *Orpheus* pipe) they, or it, may make the heart dance in a duty, and yet for all this, it may be possible, yea probable, the heart may dance after the Devils pipe, *Ezek.* 33. 32. The resolution of this case would have been fitter for some ancient experienced *Master of Assemblies*, (whose *Bible* is more in his *heart*, than *head*, than for so weak and worthless a person as I am, who may truly say with *Agur*, ἀπορώτατος πάντων, Prov. 30. 2, *Surely I am more* *Answ.*

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brutiſh than any man, and have not the underſtanding of a man. Yet ſeeing Providence hath laid the lot at my door, to uſe *Peters* words a little altered, *Act.* 3. 5, Though ſilver and golden experiences and expreſſions I have none, yet ſuch as I have I ſhall willingly impart and communicate to you. If you will lend me your *patience*, I will give you my *pains* in reſolving this weighty and worthy caſe of Conſcience, *How a Chriſtian may know, whether his activity in duty be from the Spirit of God.*

I ſhall commend to you theſe eight Characteriſtical Notes, as ſo many Touch-ſtones.

1. When we have before-hand earneſtly prayed and prepared our ſouls for ſuch activity; when you ſay and do to your ſoul, as *Jehu* did to the worſhippers of *Baal*, 2 King. 10. 19, I have a great Sacrifice to offer, O my ſoul, warn and ſummon in all the power and parts of ſoul and body, be ſure that not one be wanting, and ſo by reading, meditating and Prayer, get our ſouls into a holy frame, and gracious poſture; and humbly, yea heartily alſo beg and beſeech of God, to carry us on Eagles wings through the duty we are drawing near to; if we mount, and ſo are aloft, as (*Aquila in nubibus*) Eagles to Heaven in that duty, we may ſafely and ſurely conclude that activity is from the Spirit. When Mariners buy a wind of the Witches, (as they do in *Lapland* and other places) and they have it at every place and point, according to the purchaſe of the one, and the promiſe of the other, they may undoubtedly conclude that wind came from the ſpirit of the Devil. When we beg a wind from God, and we enjoy it at the time according to our deſire, we may upon good ground ſay, that wind came from the Spirit of God; this will appear very clear if you pleaſe to lay together theſe four things.

1. It is Gods Prerogative to hear Prayer, *Pſal.* 65. 2, *Oh thou that hearеſt Prayer, unto thee ſhall all fleſh come.*

2. It is Gods Promiſe to hear Prayer, *Pſal.* 81. 10, *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*; ſpread thy ſails by Prayer, and I will fill them by my Spirit, *Luke* 11. 13, *He will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it.*

3. It is Gods uſual courſe to perform his Promiſe: κατ' τὸ ῥητον, in that very kind, *Pſal.* 10. 17, *Lord thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cauſe thine ear to hear. I ſaid not to the ſeed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain*, Iſa. 45. 19.

4. It hath been the conſtant practice of Gods people to look after their Prayers, to ſee what ſucceſs they have had. Prayers come not out of the Ark of their ſouls, as the Raven did, never to return; but as *Noahs* Dove, to come back again with an Olive-branch into the ſoul, *Pſal.* 85. 8, *I will hear what God the Lord will ſpeak, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* Saints do not ſhoot the arrows of their Prayers as children do, ſhoot them away and never mind them, but as Archers that ſhoot their arrows up at a Bird, and ſtand expecting their returns down again; if our activity come from the return of prayers, it muſt be from the Spirit. When *Elias* prays ſo fervently, that fire might come down from Heaven, and conſume the ſacrifice, and it did ſo; the people might juſtly cry out, *The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God,*

1 Kings

1 Kings 18. 37, 39. So when we pray for fire and fervor to come down from Heaven on our ſervice, and it comes; we may cry, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God.

2. When our activity carries us *ſupra ſphæram activitatis*, above the reach of any creature; when duſt is carried up on high, the wind does it; when duſt and aſhes are carried up on high, in a duty, the wind of the Spirit does it; If a Chymiſt diſſolves a ſtone into drops of water, we may be ſure ſome help higher than a creature hath helped him. If a heart of ſtone ſhall be diſſolved into drops of water in a duty, it muſt be ſome help higher than a creatures muſt do it? if *Ganymedes* be carried up to Heaven, it muſt be by the help of *Jupiter*; if the ſoul be carried up to Heaven ſo in a duty (that 'tis an extaſie rather than an activity) it is by the help of the Spirit; if our ſpirit cryes in a duty with ſighs and groans that are unutterable, it was enabled by the Spirit of God, *Rom.* 8. 26. when we are carried through difficulties, doubts, duties, dangers that ſeem impoſſible, impaſſible, by reaſon of the Lyons in the way, and the Lyons in the ſtreets, that ſtand open-mouthed to devour us, *Prov.* 26. 13, Then to venture through all, fire, fury, faggot, this is of the Spirit of God. When *Daniel* ſhall continue active in Prayer, three times a day, with his windows open, that all might ſee him, when there were Lyons in the way indeed, *Dan.* 6. 10. When *Luther* in outward ſtreights ſhall have ſuch inward enlargements, that he comes off from his knees with a *vicimus, vicimus.* When he ſhall go to *Worms* to own the truth of Chriſt, though all the tiles upon the houſes were Devils. Of theſe Prayers, and Practices, and ſuch like, we may ſay, as *Protogenes* of a curious Line, none but *Apelles* could draw this; none but the Spirit of God could enlarge and enable to do this. *Sleidan.*

3. When we feel and find our hearts after duty filled and fraighted with ſpiritual joys, and heavenly comforts, when our ſoul is like a Merchants ſhip returned from the *Indies*, loaden as deep as it can ſwim, with all varieties of Spices, and precious Commodities, when we have ſuch inward raviſhings that our heart is a little heaven fill'd up to the brim with joy, as our Saviour prayed for us, *Joh.* 15. 11. Enjoying that joy unſpeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet 1. 8. Heaven antidated, or Heaven before-hand; when we have that joy which is the earneſt of Gods love, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9, 10, *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared* (in this life) *for them that love him*; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit. This joy is not only the fulfilling of Chriſts Prayer, but alſo the fruit of the Spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. When the King had brought his Spouſe into his Bride-chamber, after her prayer, he raviſhes her heart with joy, *Cant.* 1. 4. When *David* had been at prayer, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon me:* Then comes that rapture, *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time that their Corn, and Wine, and Oyl encreaſed*, Pſal. 46. 7. When we have greater joy after duty than Worldlings have after Harveſt, which is their greateſt joy, *gaudium meſſis*, is *meſſis gaudii*; The joy of their harveſt is all the harveſt of their joy, which this Worlds Earth-worms are likely to enjoy, *Luk.* 16. 25, *Son, remember that thou*

in

in thy life-time receiveſt thy good things, ſays *Abraham* to *Dives*.

4. When our activity in duty is conſtant, like the motion of the fire in its Orb (which Philoſophers tell us) is perpetual. *My ſoul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times*, Pſal. 119.20. The Spirit dwells in us as his Temple, 1 *Cor.* 6. 19. The body is the Temple, the Soul the Lute, the affections the Strings, the Holy-Ghoſt the Muſician, who in all our duties make melody in our hearts, *Epheſ.* 5.19. Where the Ship is alway ſailing, the wind is alway blowing, and we are ſure that ſailing comes from the Wind; if the wind lies ſtill, the Ship lies ſtill, is becalmed, 1 *Cor.* 3. 17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, ἐλευθερία, freedom and liberty are oppoſed to three things,

1. Neceſſity. 2. Co-action. 3. Reſtraint. Now the Spirit of God ſets our heels (*ut aiunt*) our hearts at liberty, not only from neceſſity, Co-action, but alſo reſtraint. Setting at liberty is freeing us from impriſonment, and giving freedom to go whither we will. The Spirit admits us to that liberty which is, 1. The purchaſe of Chriſt, *Gal.* 5. 1. 2. The priviledge of our filiation, *Rom.* 8. 21, *The glorious liberty of the Sons of God*: The Spirit makes us act as it ſelf; *Neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratiæ.* Ambr. 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, *The Spirit quickneth*, ζωοποιεῖ, makes lively, *Rom.* 8. 2. As the ſpirit of life frees us from the law of ſin and death, ſo from the Law of ſloth and deadneſs.

Per nomen libertatis non tantum intelligo a peccati & carnis ſervitute manumiſſionem. Sed etiam fiduciam quam concipimus ex adoptionis noſtræ teſtimento; convenit cum. Rom. 8. 15. *Calv. in* 2 Cor. 2. 7.

Object. But ſome poor ſoul cries out, *Wo is me, I am undone, I find none of this Spirit in me. I am none of thoſe fixed Stars about the Æquinoctial, that move many Millions in an hour; but a ſlow paced Planet, that finiſhes not his courſe in many years, whoſe motion is ſo dull, that its not diſcernable. Sure I am out of the firmament of Gods favour, and ſhall be a wandring Star*, to whom is reſerved the blackneſs or darkneſs for ever, *Jude verſ.* 13.

Anſw. It is the miſery of Miniſters, that they cannot ſpeak of the experimental ſublimities of ſome, but others are preſently deſponding and deſpairing. I would not for a world quench the ſmoaking flax, or break the bruiſed reed, *Matt.* 12. 20. Yea, I would with all my ſoul put the lambs in my boſom which cannot go, or but ſlowly, and gently lead them that are with young, *Iſa.* 40. 11. I ſpeak this to them that are upon the ſtaves of *Jacobs* Ladder in their aſcending to Heaven, to be a loadſtone to draw them up, not a milſtone to drag them down. But to anſwer more appoſitely.

1. I intend it in oppoſition to them who live in a courſe of ſin, yet now and then in a duty do feel a flaſh of joy, and thereupon preſume of their good eſtate; and not to thoſe who with *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God blameleſs, *Luk.* 1. 7. and yet do not obtain this conſtant favour.

2. I lay it down a poſitive ſign and *incluſive*, That thoſe, and all thoſe that have conſtant activities, (though differing for the altitudes and degrees) may be certain of the Spirit, as thoſe that have Trade-winds from Port to Port, may be ſure they ſail by the wind; or as thoſe that have the Organ, *medium*, and object rightly diſpoſed, may be ſure they ſee.

Bellarmine

Bellarmine tells a ſtory of an old man, that always aroſe from duty with theſe words, * *Be you ſhut, O my eyes, be ſhut, for I ſhall never behold any fairer Object than Gods face, which I have now beheld.* But not a negative ſign *excluſive*, as if thoſe (that repent of ſin, meditate on the Promiſes, pour out Prayers, walk with God, wait on Ordinances) who have it not, were caſt-aways. I am confident that many that lye wind bound in the harbour, ſhall in due time get to the Haven.

* *Claudimini oculi mei, claudimini: nihil enim pulchrius jam videbitis.*

3. There are four things belong to a Chriſtian: 1. A Habit. 2. An Act. 3. Degrees of that Act. 4. Senſe of all theſe. He may have the three firſt, and yet want the ſenſe of them. A ſhip may ſail, and yet the Mariner not ſenſible of it.

4. There is no Rule but hath ſome Exception, no Experience in one Believers heart, but a contrary experience may be found in anothers. Various are the workings of Gods Spirit in the heart, he blows when, where, how he pleaſes, *Job* 3. 8. He is called *ſeven ſpirits*, Rev. 1. 4. becauſe of his various influences. He doth, ὅπη τὸ πολὺ, blow in a duty, if the ſhip be ready, but to ſhew he is *agens liberrimum*, he will ſometime ſuſpend his Act, and leave the common Road. To conclude this, take this counſel, *Stay thy ſelf upon thy God*, Iſa. 50. 10. Remembering he will ſend forth judgment unto victory, *Mat.* 12. 20. And take this for a cordial, which is a ſpiritual Riddle, *It is a comfort to have no comfort*; the deſires of ſome are as acceptable to God, as the deeds of others.

I may truly ſay of it, as *Keckerman* ſays of *Mercuries* motion, *Valde varius & magna ex parte incognitus.*

5. When we are enlarged, and yet we are not elated; high in Gods Spirit, low in our own ſpirit. True Chriſtians are like Canes, the fuller they are of Sugar, the lower they bend. *Quanto ſublimior, tanto ſubmiſſior*; The loftier, the lowlier. Every true Saints Motto: True activity is not leaven to puff us up, but lead to pull us down. What *Bede* wiſhed ſome to obſerve of *Auſtine* the Monk; ſent over a Legate from the Pope to his Brethren the Prelates and Biſhops of *England*: I may adviſe you to obſerve, that if he carried himſelf humbly, he came from the Lord; high in duty, and humble after duty comes from the Lord. When *David* and his people had been on the Mount, in their offering to the building of the Temple, ſee what a low Valley they are in the opinion of themſelves, 1 Chron. 29. 14, *Who am I, and what is my people, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort?* —— For *all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* Here is no haughty Phariſee, *Who but I?* But an humble Publican, *Who am I?*

6. When activity in duty is expreſſed in activity in doing; when active prayers are turned into active Practices. The Emperour *Sigiſmund*, having made fair Promiſes, in a ſore fit of ſickneſs, of amendment of life, asked *Theodoricus*, Archbiſhop of *Collen*, how he might know, whether his repentance were ſincere: Who replied, if you are as careful to perform in your health, as you are forward to promiſe in your ſickneſs. 1 *Pet.* 2. 2, *As new-born babes deſire the ſincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.* When our being high in duty makes us grow high in grace and knowledg, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Even as Cedars of *Lebanon*, until (*caput inter nubila*) we lodg our heads in heaven, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10, 11. We may be ſure it is from the

Æne. Syl. lib. 2. Com. *Promptiores ſunt homines promittendo quam exequando.* Dion. l. 38.

Spirit when enlargement in duty lays on us an engagement to duty.

7. When we give God the glory of all our Actings and activities; if it be returned to his praiſe, it was received from his Spirit. When Rivers return to the Sea, it argues, they from thence proceeded, *Eccleſ.* 1. 7. When *David* and his people had ſhewed their activity in their Preſent towards their erecting of the Temple, they ſhut up all with a moſt gracious and grateful Doxology, 1 *Chron.* 29. 13, *Now therefore our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious name.* Pſal. 115. 1, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory.* He doubles *non nobis*, to lay down man, to lift up God. When we unfeignedly give God the glory, God hath undoubtedly given us the grace.

8. When we have the teſtimony of the Spirit witneſſing with our ſpirit, that this activity is from himſelf, *Gal.* 4. 6, *God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* When we are ſo enlarged in a duty, that we do cry, *Abba, Father*; this the Spirit witneſſes is his work. The Spirit doth not witneſs by a clear and diſtinct, either outward or inward voice, *totidem verbis*, this I have wrought in thee; thus to affirm, would be a Quakers fancy, or rather folly: But the Spirit doth ſweetly and ſecretly ſuggeſt to us by having wrought thoſe filial affections, and child-like diſpoſitions of Love, Joy, Peace, Hope, Fear, Grief, Confidence, *&c.* in the heart, and by enabling us to act theſe gracious diſpoſitions, as need ſhall require. This is the Spirits συμμαρτυρῆν, witneſſing with our ſpirits, thus fitted and filled with peace and purity, with melting and mourning; the Spirit doth by his impreſs and impulſe, ratifie and ſeal the witneſs of our own Spirit to make it authentick, *Rom.* 8. 15, 16, *You have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit it ſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirits*; ſo that having two witneſſes, it may be eſtabliſhed.

1. The witneſs of conſcience, which is *mille teſtes*, 2 Cor. 1. 12, *But our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience.*

Cum ſpiritus teſtatur quæ tandem reſtat ambiguitas? Chryſ. in Rom. 8. 15.

2. The witneſs of the Spirit, which is more than ten thouſand Witneſſes, becauſe he is an infallible Witneſs, that cannot erre, therefore call'd *the Spirit of Truth*, 1 Joh. 5. 6. Now theſe two putting their hands to the teſtimonial of our activity, breed and beget that παῤῥησίαν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, 1 Joh. 3. 20. That confidence in God, and Evidence to God, as *A. Lapide* interprets the word. Now as thoſe two Witneſſes teſtimony in propheſying againſt Idolatrous and Superſtitious Worſhip, was ſufficient to evidence all their actions were from the Spirit of Antichriſt, *Rev.* 11. 3. So theſe two Witneſſes teſtifying to our ſouls that theſe activities are legitimate and laudible, are ſufficient aſſurance that they came from the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt.

Uſe. 1. Makes an Apology for thoſe precious ſouls, whoſe wings are ſo beſmeared with the bird-lime of ſloth, that they are forced to put up their humble Bills to Miniſters and Congregations to beg of God in their behalf, ſpiritual quickenings; that ſo their hearts being enlarged, by the breathings of the Spirit, they may bowzingly ſail in the ways, and through the waves of Gods Commandments.

Is

Is an Advocate to plead Juſtification to the Action, in the behalf of thoſe, who as they make it a Caſe of Conſcience, ſo they make Conſcience of the Caſe, to bring their Activities to the Touch-ſtone, and to the Tryal. They know that all is not gold that gliſters, and they would not (in a thing of that eternal concernment) be deceived with Alchimy inſtead of Gold, with blear-eyed *Leah* inſtead of beautiful *Rachel*, with a Cloud inſtead of *Juno*, with a Pebble inſtead of a Pearl; and therefore they are induſtrious, and illuſtrious to try, whether their Activity in duty be from the Spirit, by thoſe ſpirits that are ingredients into their Activity. *Uſe.* 2.

WWherein are we endangered by things lawful?

Luke XVII. 27, 28.

They did eat, they drank, they married, &c.

HEre is ſet down what the generality of people were doing in the world, they were brutiſh in the days of *Noah*, before the floud came and drowned them; and in the days of *Lot*, before the fire came down from Heaven and deſtroyed them. In *Mat. chap.*24.38. it is expreſſed by participles, *they were eating*, &c. τρώγοντες, &c. this ſhews the vigour and activity of their ſpirits ſpent on thoſe things in which they were ingaged, and the word τρώγοντες, *proprie de brutis dici volunt Grammatici, ut etiam videatur magna eſſe hujus verbi emphaſis, qua ſignificatur homines brutorum inſtar fere ventri diditos.* Beza. This word ſignifieth a kind of brutiſh feeding themſelves without fear, as it is, *Jude* 12. but here in the Text, the words run ἤθιον ἔπινον ἠγόμουν, &c. They are expreſſed by an ἀσύνθετον without a copulative, *Camerarius* obſerves, *hæc ita ἀσυνθέτως, petita magis notant & arguunt hominum temporis illius ſecuritatem:* ſo that the vehemency, and eagerneſs, and intention of their ſpirits in the things they were imployed in, is hereby noted: They were very buſie, their hearts, and heads, and hands, all taken up in eating, drinking, buying, ſelling, *&c.* the actions named, and the comforts which they were enjoying, thoſe natural and civil imployments in which they were ingaged, all good and lawful in themſelves, but they were not well imployed in them; the uſe of thoſe things was lawful, but they did ſinfully uſe them: for there is in all theſe actions a narrow way, and a broad way, *Matt.* 21. 13, 14. the narrow way which is bounded and limited, and under a rule as to the end, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. *viz.* the glory of God, and alſo to the circumſtances, though there be but few that find it: but the broad way, which is without bounds and limits; this is the common road which moſt walk in. Thus far, but no further, ſaith God; the will of God is the boundary of the narrow way, but luſt knoweth no bounds, and will not be preſcribed to.

The

The very Heathens looked at their common actions as under bounds; they had their Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου *ſuſtine & abſtine*, εὐπομπτέον καὶ ἀνεκλέον. *Gelli. Noſtes, l. 7. c. 19. Anton. Pig. l. 4. Sect. 3.* But the difficulty lies in obſerving the juſt limits in the uſe of lawful things; and therefore one ſaid well, *Licitis perimus omnes, &c.* Ruin uſually ariſeth from the uſe of lawful things, there being moſt danger where it is leaſt ſuſpected. In all our comforts there is a forbidden fruit, which ſeemeth fair, and taſteth ſweet, but which muſt not be touched.

The Obſervations may be theſe:

1. *That all our actions natural, in eating,* &c. *and civil, in buying and ſelling,* &c. *come under a rule*; This is implied, elſe the Lord would not have brought thoſe great judgments on them, barely for their eating, *&c.* had they not in thoſe imployments tranſgreſſed a rule.

2. *Such are uſually the miſcarriages of men in the uſe of lawful things, that they are the procuring cauſes of the moſt dreadful judgments.* For we ſee that the Lord makes mention of theſe very things lawful in themſelves, as the cauſes of the flood on the World, and fire on *Sodom.*

3. *The Lord puts great weight and ſtreſs on thoſe very things which we take but little or no notice of.* The old World and *Sodom*, little thought they ſhould come to ſo ſevere a reckoning for their eating and drinking, *&c.*

To bring things to an iſſue, as to the caſe concerning our danger of ſin and miſcarriage in lawful things; I ſhall 1. inquire, *When lawful things become ſin to us.* 2. *How we may judg of our hearts and ſelves, and diſcern their miſcarriage and ſin in the purſuing, enjoyment and uſe of lawful things?* 3. *What are the ſins that attend the immoderate and inordinate uſe of lawful things?*

As to the firſt, I anſwer, *When lawful comforts which are given us for helps, become hinderances in our way to Heaven, then they become ſin to us.* When we by our abuſive cleaving to the Creature, by our inordinate affection to it, by our exorbitant diſorderly purſuing of it, do abuſe our helps, they become hinderances to us, and as it was ſaid of *Gideons* Ephod, *Judg.* 8. 27, *He made an Ephod*; which when it became an Idol, became a ſnare. When lawful comforts are immoderately and paſſionately deſired, purſued, enjoyed, then they become an Idol and a beloved, or at leaſt they become beloved ſo far as to carry it from Chriſt, from duty: Now when any thing becomes an Idol in the heart, ſo as that the ſoul begins to bow before it, and yield obedience to it, then it becomes an Idol; and what is an Idol in the heart, is a ſtumbling block of iniquity in our life, *Ezek.* 14. 4. It is a ſtumbling block, an hindrance in our way: ſuch Idols in the heart, uſually prove great offences, and both σκάνδαλον καὶ προσκίμμα, ſtumbling blocks and occaſions of falling; the firſt ſignifies a ſtumbling block to keep one off from duty; ſuch an offence *Peter* was to Chriſt, *Matth.* 19. 23. He would have hindred him in that great work which He had to do. The ſecond ſignifies a gall-trap which will vex and trouble one in duty: ſo that when our comforts become Idols, images of jealouſie in our hearts, then they are ſtumbling blocks, and ſo obſtacles in our way to Heaven.

Again,

Again, when our lawful comforts by our dotage become beloveds, or greatly, paſſionately beloved, then they become hinderances; when your hearts inflame themſelves with your comforts, as the Lord ſpeaks of them, *Iſa.* 57. 5, *They inflamed themſelves with their Idols:* When the heart doth inordinately love Creature-comforts, they are then turned into luſts; ſo that of lawful comforts they are made unlawful luſts, 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, 16. the things of the World, or the profits, pleaſures, honours, which uſually mens hearts and thoughts are taken up withal, are good and lawful things in themſelves, but being abuſed, they are called, *the luſts of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, &c.* The Holy Ghoſt puts the luſt that is within us, to expreſs the profits, pleaſures and honours of the world which are without us. So that the good things of this life, by our inordinate love to them being abuſed, the very nature and property of the things are altered, for inſtead of proving good helps to us when lawfully loved and uſed, become luſts that hinder us, for they fight againſt our ſouls, 2 *Pet.* 2. 11. and members of the old man, and weapon in his hand to fight againſt God; they become one with old *Adam* in us, and therefore *Col.* 3. 5. we are bid to mortifie our earthly members; he doth not ſay, mortifie your luſts, but members, they being all one, and make up together a body of ſin, one old man, as it is called, *Eph.* 4. 22. Now it is certain that the old man in us, the body of ſin, is an enemy and a hindrance to us in our way to Heaven.

In this caſe, thoſe foul ſins of Idolatry and Adultery are committed with the Creature, in both which ſins the heart is ſtollen away from God, drawn away from the proper object. The Apoſtle uſeth that expreſſion, *Jam.* 1. 14, ὑπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἐξελκόμενος, *drawn away by luſt*, or ſome object, in an unlawful conjunction with the heart, then the heart comes to be glued to it, as God ſpeaks, *Hoſ.* 4. 17, *They are joined to Idols*, fixed to them; ſo that as in Idolatry, the heart is joined to and fixed to the Idol, ſo as that it will not eaſily part with it, as it is *Jer.* 2. 10, *Has a Nation changed its God*, q. d. no, they are fixed to their gods, and they will not change them. So it is in the ſin of adultery, the heart is ſtollen from the proper object; as it is *Hoſ.* 4. 11. ſpeaking of Wine and Women, it is ſaid, *they ſteal away the heart*, and it is glued to that which it goes a whoring after, ſo that it will not be taken off from it, *Prov.* 2. 9. When the Creature becomes an Idol in the heart, then there is Idolatry committed, and when it is a beloved, there is adultery committed, the hope, and truſt, and confidence of the ſoul is gone, the love and care, the joy and delight of the ſoul is gone, and the ſoul with every Creature that it thus enjoys, poureth out her fornications, as the Lord ſpake of them, *Ezek.* 16. 5. and as they *Iſa.* 23. 17, are ſaid, *to commit fornication with all Kingdoms*; ſo a heart which inordinately loveth, and doteth on, and is glued to Creature-comforts, recommits fornication and abomination with them.

The ſecond Inquiry was, *How we may judg of our hearts, and know when they miſcarry and offend in the purſuing, uſe and enjoyment of lawful things?*

1. When

1. When our deſire of, and our endeavours after worldly things grow ſtrong and impatient, and very eager and impatient; as *Rachel* ſaid, *Give me children or elſe I die*, Gen. 30. 1. When we begin to ſay, I muſt have ſuch an accommodation whatever it coſt me, I muſt have ſuch a comfort or I am undone: ſuch a purſuit after worldly comforts, argues a heart very carnal; and he that miſcarries ſo much in ſeeking after the things of this world, will not mend the matter much when he comes to enjoy them: when the heart groweth ſick after worldly things in the deſire of them, uſually it ſurfeiteth when it gaineth it: as *Amnon* was ſick for his ſiſter, 2 *Sam.* 13. 1, 2. he had a ſurfeit after: and as *Ahab*, 1 King. 21. 4. he was ſick with impatient earneſt longing for *Naboths* Vineyard. When your heart is very impatient till you do obtain your deſires, you are never well with that thing which you do ſo obtain: When the affections grow ſtrong and warm, that you can indure no oppoſition or contradiction in the purſuance of your deſires, but you can bear any trouble or hardſhip that you may obtain the things deſired, as we ſee in *Shechem*, Gen. 34. who could endure Circumciſion that he might have *Dinah*; and in *Jacob*, who did endure very much that he might have *Rachel*, Gen. 29. 18. then there is a match towards, then in ſuch a caſe when it is gained, the heart becomes glued to it, and commits fornication with it, and cannot endure to be touched or thwarted in the fruition of it; as *Demetrius* and the Silverſmiths, when they found their *Diana* began to be touched by *Pauls* Doctrine, *Act.* 19. 24, 25, *&c.* they made an uproar, they would not endure that. When ye look on any thing with a greedy and impatient longing, luſting eye, that if you do obtain it, (if God doth not otherwiſe order it) will prove a ſnare to you, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 69. 22. an Idol, an image of jealouſie, a curſe and a croſs.

2. When you have raiſed expectations and hopes of great contentment and ſatisfaction from your comforts: when you promiſe to your ſelves greater matters from the Creature than it can yield, then you miſcarry when you look on the Creature through the multiplying glaſs of your affections and luſts, and ſee them as they are ſo repreſented bigger and better than they are, and from thence you have high valuation of them, and raiſed expectations alſo of great things from them: when we fancy an excellency in the Creature that is not, we fancy a fulneſs in an empty thing, a ſatisfaction in an inſufficient, unſatisfying comfort, we fancy a ſtability in a vain, fleeting, vaniſhing thing: when we fancy a fountain excellency in a broken ciſtern, as they did, *Jer.* 2. 13. then upon this the heart is raiſed to great expectations of pleaſure, profit, *&c.* then the heart ſhamefully miſcarries, and as it is ſaid, *Rev.* 13. 3, 4. there is a ſtrange beaſt that turned the eyes of all the World after it; they looked with an eye of great expectation from this Beaſt, and then they wondred and adored alſo; ſo that they looked with an eye of admiration and adoration too.

3. When the obedience and willing ſubmiſſion of the ſoul is brought off to any worldly comfort, and the ſoul ſtoops to its ſcepter, and

and the faculties like the Centurions ſervants, do as they are bid; ſuch comforts which are ſlaviſhly obeyed, are ſinfully enjoyed. When we are afraid to diſpleaſe them, the fear is at command; when we are careful to pleaſe ſuch a luſt, then the care is under ſubjection; when we are troubled if croſſed, then our ſorrow it at command; if rejoyced when that is gratified, then the love and delight of the ſoul are at command; *And his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey*, Rom. 6.16. When the ſoul is even as the ſervant that looks to the hand of the Maſter, with an obediential eye, *Pſal.* 123. 2, expecting a command, and ready to yield obedience, ſuch a comfort is a ſin and a curſe to you. Chriſt calls to us to deny our ſelves, *Matt.* 16. 24. Profits, pleaſures, carnal advantages ſay, rather deny Chriſts command. Who is obeyed? Chriſt ſaith, *mortifie your luſts*; luſt ſaith, gratifie us; conſider who is obeyed? If Family-duties, and perſonal private duties; if praying, holy meditation, ſecret cloſe communion with God be neglected, becauſe multitude of worldly buſineſs, and full and great Trade in the world commands you another way, and requires the love, and zeal, and ſtrength, and care of the heart to another attendance, then you are under another Soveraign than Chriſt. The obedience of the heart is carried to another Law, *other Lords rule over you.* Now the ſoul that is under the command of the creature, as I have ſhewed, that comfort becomes a ſin which uſurps the throne of the heart.

4. When the ſoul groweth very tender and compaſſionate towards ſuch a comfort, and begins to ſpare that above other things, then that becomes a luſt, and luſt is very tender and delicate, and muſt be tenderly uſed: right eyes are very tender, the leaſt touch fetcheth tears; when thou canſt not endure that either the Word of God, or the Rod of God ſhould come too near, or ſo much as touch upon ſuch a carnal contentment, ſuch a comfort, ſuch a Husband, ſuch a Wife or Child, thou canſt not endure that the Lord ſhould ſmite thee in any of theſe: but thou cryeſt out, *Oh ſpare this*, as *David* concerning his *Abſalom*, 2 Sam. 18.4, 5, *Oh tender the young man, pray deal gently with him:* and as old *Jacob* with his *Benjamin*, *He could more eaſily ſpare his other children than him, he looked with a very tender, compaſſionate eye on him.* Whatever thou doſt enjoy with ſuch a tender bleeding heart and eye, it hath raviſhed thy heart very far, and it is become thy Idol and beloved very far, and thy ſin.

5. When the care, anxiety, and ſolicitude of the ſoul runs out after the comforts of this life, ſaying, what ſhall I eat, what ſhall I drink, how ſhall I live and maintain my Wife and Children, what ſhall I do to get, to keep ſuch or ſuch a thing? when the thoughts of the heart are taken up for protection, for proviſion, to get and hold the things of this life; ſuch comforts as are ſo gotten, and ſo enjoyed, they are ſinfully obtained and maintained, and this our Lord Chriſt doth clear to us, *Matt.* 6. 25, 26. And he warns his Diſciples in a ſpecial manner againſt all ſuch cares, *Luke* 22. 34. προσέχετε τὸν νῦν.

6. That comfort which thou art not dead unto, neither is that dead to thee, thou wilt hardly enjoy with ſafety to thy ſelf, or thou wilt part withal, but upon ſevere terms.

If when God by his providence calls for ſuch or ſuch a comfort, Husband, Wife, Child, yet thou canſt not, you will not reſign and give up that comfort at Gods call; but thou groweſt impatient and ſullen, when he doth but attempt to bereave thee of it: God may perhaps let thee have thy luſt, as he dealt with the *Iſraelites*, Pſal. 78. 18, 30, but thou ſhalt have that comfort without any comfort, it may be with a curſe.

When we cannot bear the thoughts of either abſence or loſs of ſuch or ſuch things, cannot endure the thoughts of parting: it is like the tearing off a limb from the body, when God takes away ſuch a Husband, or Wife, or Child, or Eſtate, *&c.* It argues that they were greatly abuſed while we had them. If there were an indifferency of ſpirit in us, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 1*Cor.* 7. 29, 30, &c. That they that were married, were as if they were not married, *&c.* they would part upon eaſier terms by far. When the life is bound up in a comfort, it is death to part, *Gen.* 44. 22, 30, as it was with *Jacob* to his *Benjamin*. When the creature had got too great an intereſt in thee, that thou canſt by no means bring thy heart to think of leaving it, or its leaving thee, though God ſeems to call for it, the heart begins ſecretly to riſe up againſt God, and to murmur and quarrel at providence, this argueth a very carnal heart. If the heart did hang looſe from theſe things, thou mighteſt enjoy them with more comfort, and part with them with more eaſe.

7. If after God hath been weaning us in a more ſpecial manner, by his Word and Rod, and taking off our hearts from our worldly comforts, yet the ſtrong bent of the ſoul is towards them: it argues much carnal love to them, that we are not crucified to thoſe comforts.

When the ſoul hath its ſecret ſinful converſe and fellowſhip with a creature-comfort, againſt its own conviction to the contrary; it may be thou haſt repented, or at leaſt hath ſeemed to repent of ſuch a way and courſe, yet for all this, thy heart continually hangs that way: and as it is, *Prov.* 19. 17, Her *ſtoln waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant*; when a ſtoln glance of the eye, a ſtoln kiſs from a luſtful object is ſtill pleaſant to the ſoul, there is much of a meretricious carriage in that heart, it is ſo far ſinfully enjoyed.

When the heart hankers much after ſuch a thing, it is ſtoln away, *Hoſea* 4. 11, when it hangs after it, as it is *Jer.* 22. 17, Their hearts went after their covetouſneſs: when the heart hath its ſecret haunts, and poſtern-doors to get out to ſuch or ſuch an object, and that object hath its ſecret paſſage to the ſoul. There be ſome ſecret correſpondencies betwixt the heart and the object, when the luſtful object hath its well-come, it no ſooner knocks but is admitted; when it hath a free paſſage into the heart, and the heart hangs after it, nay, perhaps admits it when it is in duty, if it comes even when we are with God in prayer, and is admitted, it argues a ſinful whoriſh familiarity.

8. If after ſolemn and frequent warnings, invitations and earneſt beſeechings, perhaps corrections too, God calls thee to a more ſtrict and cloſe walking with him, in a ſeverer way of ſelf-denyal, in a more free and full enjoyment of himſelf; if God would ſequeſter thee from thy Oxen,

Farm, married Wife, that he might have thee more alone from the croud, and duſt, and tumult of the world; if yet after all this, thou then ſetteſt thy wits on work to frame excuſes: If Chriſt ſpeak to thee as he did to his Spouſe, *Cant.* 7. 11, *Come, let us go and lodg in the villages*; Come, let us go out of the City-crowd and multiplicity of worldly buſineſſes, and let us retire alone that we may more fully enjoy one another. If he ſaith to thee as *Verſ.* 12, he ſpeaks to his Spouſe, *Let us go up early to the vineyard*, &c. and calls thee off to a more early, earneſt, diligent attendance on him, and thou doeſt as the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 2, 3. makeſt lazy excuſes, for thy eaſie gainful trade and way of life thou leadeſt; if ſo it be with thee, thou keepeſt thy comforts upon ſinful terms.

When the Arguments, and pleas, and excuſes, and pretexts are for luſt; when denyals, equivocations, and thy reaſon are all at work for luſt. When God calls to ſelf-denyal in ſome creature-comfort, and then the heart forms excuſes for thy enjoyment of it, as they in the Goſpel, all began to make excuſes, when they were call'd to the Wedding-Supper, their lawful comforts became a ſnare and ſin to them, *Luk.* 14. 16, 17. If thy heart in ſuch a caſe ſtudies colours to adorn or ſet it out, or ſet it off, or covers to protect it, then it is ſinful; the heart miſcarries in the enjoyment of its comforts, when it ſtudies how to hide it ſelf in the enjoyment of it as much as may be even from the eye of God.

The third thing propounded was, *What are the ſins that attend the immoderate ſinful uſe or abuſe of lawful comforts?*

I will confine my ſelf to the ſins in the Text; The firſt ſin in their eating and drinking, *&c.* was ſenſuality, and that is expreſſed by the word τραφέντες, which as I have ſhewed, is properly applyed to brutes, an eating after a brutiſh manner, and by the ἀσύνθετον, which notes the vehemency and intention of their ſpirits, laid out in their ſenſual enjoyments: men are apt (eſpecially in abundance) to grow ſenſual and brutiſh, to uſe their comforts without fear, to indulge themſelves very far, and ſo ſay to themſelves as the Rich Glutton, *Soul take thine eaſe, eat, drink and be merry*, *Luk.* 12. 19, a ſenſual brutiſh ſpeech, fitter for a ſwine than a man; abundance of the things of this life hath a ſtrange vertue to corrupt a man into a brute. *Deut.* 32. 15, *Jeſhurun waxed fat and kicked.* How is he degenerated to a fat Heifer or Horſe, that kicks and winſeth? The Lord complains *Jer.* 5. 7, 8, that *when he fed them to the full, they committed adultery, &c.* and were like *fed horſes*, brutiſh and ſenſual: ſuch as gratifie their luſts in eating, *&c.* are ſtrong Bulls of *Baſhan*, Pſal. 22. 12: the *Pſalmiſt* ſays, he was compaſſed about with them who were like Bulls in a fat paſture, well fed and ſtrong, and ready to gore and puſh: the great, and rich, and potent ones, are compared to theſe brutes: We are very apt in the midſt of comforts to grow ſenſual, and before we are aware, as *Noah* and *Lot*, who both were overtaken: Our Lord Chriſt, *Luk.* 11. 34, exhorts his Diſciples againſt theſe, and bids them to beware; the words note a very diligent and intent ſtudy and intention of mind to what he ſaid, leſt their heart ſhould be overcharged; it ſeems ſtrange that he ſhould give the Diſciples an exhortation againſt ſenſuality and brutiſh ſins, but that he knew their natures; and though they were

moſt

moſt temperate perſons, yet he bids them *beware of ſurfeiting*, knowing that if the beſt did not watch, they might be overtaken with ſenſuality.

2. Pride, eaſe and idleneſs, uſually go together; the immoderate or inordinate uſe of the Creature, this was it which God warned his people of, *Deut.* 8. 11, 12, 14, *take heed when thou art full*, &c. *leſt thy heart be lifted up.* So *Pſal.* 123. 4, there 'tis ſaid, *His ſoul was filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud:* they are put together. When we fall to eating and drinking, the next thing is to take our eaſe, *Luk.* 12. 19.

So the Lord ſpeaks, *Hoſ.* 13. 6, *According to their paſtures, ſo were they filled, and their hearts were exalted, and they have forgotten me.* Eaſe and idleneſs attend ſenſuality, theſe gratifie a brutiſh diſpoſition very much: fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs, were *Sodoms* ſins, *Ezek.* 16. 49. And the rich Glutton ſang a Requiem to his ſoul; uſually when men abound in outward comforts, they are moſt apt to grow lethargick and ſlothful, or at leaſt they will not take much pains; it may be they will be doing ſomething, but they will not be at much pains, eſpecially as to their ſouls, *Hoſ.* 10. 11, *Ephraim is a Heifer that loveth to tread out the Corn, &c.* but not to plow, he cares not for that; they were wont to uſe Beaſts in treading their Corn, inſtead of threſhing of it; now it was Gods command, *That the Oxe that trod out the Corn, ſhould not be muzled,* but that he might eat as he did work.

Then here is *Ephraim* at a good lazy work that hath meat in the mouth of it, wages for work, and preſent pay; here is Corn, he abounds in outward things; and though he treads out the Corn, he will not plow, that is too hard labour, he will not go abroad in the wet and cold, and ſeems to have reference to thoſe of the Tribes that would not go to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, they would not take ſo much pains: *Ephraim* conſiders his eaſe, he loves no hard work; *Ephraim* did abound and grow rich, *Hoſ.* 12. 7, 8. He drave a great trade in the world, and took pains, but yet it was in a way that might gratifie his luſt, and carry on his gain; but what ſaith God to this temper? ſee *Hoſ.* 10. 11, the Lord ſaith, *he will paſs upon his fair neck, I'le make Ephraim to ride:* He had a fair and a beautiful neck, he led ſuch a life, that though he trod out the Corn, he lived in plenty, eaſe, and idleneſs; no yoke came on his neck, he would not abide a yoke to be put on, but by his lazy life and good trade he had a beautiful neck; he became tender and delicate: But I'le paſs over his fair neck, (as ſome take it) I'le cauſe a heavy yoke to come over his neck, and will make him work, and ſet him to hard labour, I'le make him a drudg. *I'le make him ride*; ſome take it for their ſpeedy Captivity that ſhall tame him; by his plenty and eaſe he is grown ſo luſty, like a reſtive Jade, I'le ride him; I'le ſet ſome on his back ſhall ride him off his legs; and *Verſ.* 12, *Jacob ſhall break the clods*, the ten Tribes, this is a baſe drudging work to break the clods, but this ſervile work ſhall be his. We ſee in *Laodicea* their plenty and idleneſs (*Rev.* 16. 17) went together, and they were to be ſpewed out.

3. Then there is ſecurity follows this eating, &c. and uſually where there is abundance of theſe, and that men are much taken up with theſe, there is a ſecure ſleepy forgetful ſpirit goes with them: and doubtleſs this was the ſin

of the old World, that though *Noah* was a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, and his making the Ark was a publick alarm to the world, yet they went on in their way, eating and drinking, *&c.* very ſecurely, promiſing to themſelves peace and ſafety. Such as are filled with what they eat and drink, are apt to drop aſleep; and then they are ſecure, they apprehend themſelves ſafe from danger; they are compared to a drunken man, that doth not know in what condition he is, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 6, ἀνανήψωσιν, the word is to return to ones ſelf after drunkenneſs, that they may awaken: for it ſignifies one that is ſecure, and ſo goes on in his way, when he returns and recovers himſelf, he is as a man that was drunk, and awakes and returns to himſelf: Whence it is that God did ſo often caution his people againſt a ſecure ſleepy forgetful frame of ſpirit. And when the Lord was to bring the Children of *Iſrael* into *Canaan*, he ſtill bids them they ſhould not forget him, *Deut.* 6. 8, 14; but this ſin he complains of in them, *Hoſ.* 2. 13. When *David* was in the midſt of his comforts, he grew ſecure, *Pſal.* 30. 6. We find ſome brought in *Iſa.* 28. 15, ſpeaking in their thoughts that they had *made a covenant with death and hell, &c.* they in their ſecure thoughts apprehended themſelves free from danger, ſuch thoughts ever carry impenitency and hardneſs of heart with them, *Zeph.* 1. 12. *Jer.* 48. 11, when they are ſetled on their lees, they never conſider, or ſay, *what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. Incogitancy and ſecurity go together; a ſecure perſon never conſiders his own eſtate, danger nor duty: When once a man grows ſleepy, promiſing to himſelf freedom from danger and good days, then he falls into ſome ſin or other, or ſome evil falls upon him, *Mat.* 24. 48, 50, *The evil ſervant ſaid his Maſter delayed his coming*; and *ver.* 49, *He began to beat his fellow-ſervant.* 1. He is ſecure, he promiſeth to himſelf ſafety, *his Maſter delays, &c.* 2. He falls to beat his fellow-ſervant: Or elſe they fall into ſome ſin, *Mat.* 25. 5, 8, *While they ſlept, their Lamps went out*, or ſome evil befalls them; *Lam.* 1. 9, *Sudden deſtruction*, 1 Theſ. 5. 3. When men grow ſecure as to their ſtate, and of a ſupine ſleepy careleſs ſpirit, ſuch are ever in a moſt unſafe, ſinful condition, nigh to curſing, and on the very brink of ruin and utter deſtruction.

How

How muſt we make Religion our buſineſs?

Luke II. 49.

Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs?

THESE are the words of our Lord Jeſus, whoſe Lips dropped as an Honey-comb. The occaſion was this; Chriſt having the ſpirit of Wiſdom and Sanctity poured on him without meaſure, being but twelve years old, goes to the Temple, and fell a diſputing with the Doctors, *verſ.* 46; where ſhould Learning bloſſom but upon that Tree which did bear ſeveral ſorts of fruit? Who could better interpret ſecrets, than he who lay in his Fathers boſom? *All that heard him were aſtoniſhed at his underſtanding*, verſ. 47. In the *Greek* it is ἐξίσαντο, they were *out of themſelves* with admiration: well might they admire, that he who never had been at the Univerſity, ſhould be able to ſilence the great Rabbies; *Joh.* 7. 15, *How knoweth this man letters, having never learned!* While they were wondring, his Mother (who now was come to ſeek him) propounds this queſtion, *Son why haſt thou thus dealt with us?* verſ. 48. that is, Why haſt thou put us to all this labour in ſeeking thee? In the words of the Text Chriſt makes a rational and religious reply, *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs?* in the *Greek* it is ἐν τοῖς τοῦ πατρός μου, *in the things of my Father.* As if Chriſt had ſaid, I muſt be doing the work which my Father in Heaven hath ſet me about, for this received I my Miſſion and Unction, that I might do the will of him that ſent me; what am I in the World for, but to promote his glory, propagate his truth, and be as a load-Star to draw ſouls to Heaven? *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Fathers buſineſs?*

Col. 2. 9.

Uſque ad ſtuporem perculſi. Budæus.

Minime objurgans, ſed rem fidenter & modeſtè quærens. Brugenſis.

Joh. 5. 4.

From this example of our bleſſed Saviour in making his Fathers work *his buſineſs*, we learn this great Truth,

Doctr.

That it is the duty of every Chriſtian to make Religion his buſineſs.

Religion is not a παέργον, or thing by the bye, proper only for ſpare hours, but it muſt be the grand buſineſs of our lives; St. *Paul* made it ſo, his great care was to *know* Chriſt, and to be *found* in Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 9, 10. how abundantly did he lay out himſelf for God, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. περισσότερον ἐκοπίασα,

ἐκοπίασα, *I laboured more abundantly than they all*, &c. Saint *Paul* moved heavenward, not ſlowly as the Sun on the Dyal, but as the Sun in its hemiſphere with a winged ſwiftneſs; he made Religion his buſineſs.

For the illuſtrating and unfolding of this, there are three Queſtions to be reſolved.

1. What is meant by Religion?
2. Why we muſt make Religion our buſineſs?
3. What it is to make Religion our buſineſs?

Queſt. 1. *Lactantius l. 4 div. inſtit.* 1. What is meant by Religion? I anſwer, the Latin word *religio quaſi religatio*, it ſignifies *a knitting together*; ſin hath looſned us from God; but when Religion comes unto the heart, it doth *religare*, faſten the heart to God again; as the members are knit to the head by ſeveral nerves and ligaments; Religion is the ſpiritual ſinew and ligament that knits us to God. The Greek word for Religion εὐσέβεια *, ſignifies *a right worſhipping*. This is Religion, when we not only worſhip the true God, but in that manner which he hath preſcribed; by a right rule, from a right principle, to a right end.

* Ab εὖ, & σέβομαι.

Queſt. 2. 2. The ſecond Queſtion is, Why we muſt make Religion our buſineſs? I anſwer, Becauſe Religion is a matter of the higheſt nature; while we are ſerving God, we are doing Angels work: the buſineſs of Religion doth infinitely out-balance all things beſides; pleaſure, profit, honour, (the Trinity which the world adores) are all of an inferior alloy, and muſt give way to Religion. The fear of God is ſaid to be *the whole duty of man*, Eccleſ. 12. 13, or as it is in the Hebrew כל האדם *the whole of man*: other things may delight, Religion doth ſatiate; other things may make us wiſe to *admiration*, Religion makes us *wiſe to ſalvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15.

Queſt. 3. 3. The third Queſtion is, What it is to make Religion our buſineſs? I anſwer: It conſiſts principally in theſe ſeven things.

1. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we wholly devote our ſelves to Religion; *Pſal.* 119. 38, *Stabliſh thy word unto thy ſervant, who is devoted to thy fear*; as a Scholar who devotes himſelf to his ſtudies, makes Learning his buſineſs: a godly man may ſometimes run himſelf through precipitancy and incogitancy, upon that which is evil; there's no man ſo bad but he may do ſome good actions, and there's no man ſo good but he may do ſome bad actions; but the courſe and tenor of a godly mans Life is Religious; when he doth deviate to ſin, yet he doth devote himſelf to God. 'Tis with a Chriſtian as it is with a company of Mariners at Sea, they are bound for ſuch a coaſt; now while they are ſailing they may meet with ſuch a croſs wind as may turn them back, and drive them a quite contrary way; but as ſoon as the ſtorm is over, and the Sea calm, they recover themſelves again, and get into the right way where they ſailed before: ſo it is with a Chriſtian, Heaven is the haven he is bound for, the Scripture is the compaſs he ſails by; yet a contrary wind of temptation blowing, he may be driven

Jam. 3. 20.

driven back into a ſinful action, but he recovers himſelf again by repentance, and ſails on conſtantly to the heavenly Port. This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when notwithſtanding ſome excurſions through humane frailty, we are *devoted to Gods fear*, and dedicate our τὸ ζῆν to God.

2. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we intend the buſineſs of Religion *chiefly*; it doth *principatum optinere*, Matt. 6. 33. *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God.* Firſt in *time*, before all things, and firſt in *affection*, above all things. We muſt give Religion the precedency, making all other things either *ſubſervient*, or *ſubordinate* to it. We are to provide for our Families, but chiefly for our ſouls, this is to make Religion our buſineſs. *Jacob* put the cattel before, and made his Wives and Children lag after, Gen. 32. 16. 'Tis unworthy to make Religion come behind in the rear, it muſt lead the van, and all other things muſt ſtoop and vail to it: he never had Religion in his heart, who ſaith to any worldly thing, *in the throne thou ſhalt be greater.* *Si Chriſtus pro te de cœleſti ſede deſcendit, tu propter ipſam fuge terrena.* Aug.

3. We make Religion our buſineſs, when our thoughts are moſt buſied about Religion: while others are thinking how they ſhall do to get a living, our thoughts are, how we ſhall do to be ſaved. *David* did muſe upon God, *Pſal.* 139. 3, *While I was muſing the fire burned.* Thoughts are as paſſengers in the ſoul: when we travel every day to the City of God, and are contemplating glory and eternity, this is to make Religion our buſineſs. *Theophilact* calls holy contemplation, the gate and portal by which we enter into Heaven; a Chriſtian by divine ſoliloquies and ejaculations, is in Heaven before his time; he is wrapped up into Paradiſe, his thoughts are all pack'd up and gone. ἡ διάνοια πῦρ ἐφλέγετο ἐμαυτῷ διαλεγόμενος περὶ τῆς γαζοφυλακίου τοῦ θεοῦ. Theoph.

4. We make Religion our buſineſs, when our main end and ſcope is to ſerve God: he is ſaid to make the world his buſineſs, whoſe great deſign is to get the World. St. *Pauls* ultimate end was, that Chriſt might be *magnified*, and the Church *edified:* our aims muſt be good as well as our actions. Many make uſe of Religion for ſiniſter ends; like the Eagle, while ſhe flyes aloft, her eye is upon her prey: Hypocrites ſerve God, *propter aliud*; they love the *Temple* for the *gold*; they court the Goſpel, not for its beauty, but for its Jewels: theſe do not make Religion their buſineſs, but a politick trick and artifice to get money; but when we make Religion our buſineſs, when the glory of God is mainly in our eye, and the very purport and intent of our life is, *to live to him who hath died for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 15, God is the *center*, and all the lines of our actions muſt be drawn to this center. Phil. 1. 20. 2 Cor. 12. 19. Matt. 23. 17. μηδὲν πρόζεις ἂν μὴ κέρδος ᾖ· ἔχει τὸ χρῆσθαι. Chryſ.

5. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we do trade with God every day, *Phil.* 3. 20, *Our converſation is in Heaven.* The *Greek* Word for *converſation* πολίτευμα, ſignifies commerce and traffick: our Merchandize is in Heaven: a man may live in one place, and drive

Ut municipes cœlorum nos gerimus.

drive his trade in another: a Saint though he lives in the world, yet he trades above the Moon, he is a merchant for the pearl of price. This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when we keep an holy intercourſe with God; there's a trade driven between us and Heaven, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3, *Our fellowſhip is with the Father and with his Son Jeſus*; God comes down to us upon the wing of his Spirit, and we go up to him upon the wing of prayer.

6. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we redeem time from ſecular things, for the ſervice of God: a good Chriſtian is the greateſt monopolizer, he doth hoard up all the time he can for Religion, *Pſal.* 119.62, *At midnight will I riſe and praiſe thee.* Thoſe are the beſt hours which are ſpent with God; and *David* having taſted how ſweet the Lord was, would borrow ſome time from his ſleep, that he might take a turn in Heaven. It well becomes Chriſtians to take time from worldly occaſions, ſinful dreſſings, idle viſits, that they may be the more intent upon the matters of Religion. I have read of an holy man, who being tempted by his former evil companions to ſin, he made this anſwer, I am ſo buſie in reading in a little Book with three Leaves, that I have no leiſure ſo much as to mind my other buſineſs: and being asked afterward, Whether he had read over the book? replied, This Book with three Leaves are of three ſeveral colours, Red, White, and Black, which contain ſuch deep myſteries, that I have reſolved with my ſelf to read therein all the days of my life; in the firſt leaf which is *Red*, I meditate on the precious blood of Chriſt which was ſhed for my ſins; in the *White* leaf, I meditate on the pure and delicious joys of Heaven; in the *Black* leaf I contemplate the hideous and dreadful torments of Hell, prepared for the wicked to all eternity. This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when we are ſo taken up with it, that we have ſcarce any leiſure for other things. Chriſtian, thou haſt a God to ſerve, and a ſoul to ſave, and if thou haſt any thing of Religion in thee, thou wilt take heed of the *thieves of time*, and wilt engroſs all opportunities for the beſt things. How far are they from Chriſtianity, who juſtle out holy duties? inſtead of borrowing time from the world for prayer, they ſteal time from prayer that they may follow the world.

7. We make Religion our buſineſs, when we ſerve God with all our might: our ſtrength and ſpirits are drawn forth about Religion; we *ſeek*, *ſweat*, *ſtrive*, beſtir our ſelves as in a matter of life and death, and put forth not only *diligence*, but *violence*: 2 *Sam.* 6. 14, *David danced before the Lord with all his might*: This is to make Religion our buſineſs, when we ſhake off ſloth, and put on zeal as a garment. We muſt not only pray, but pray *fervently*, Jam. 5. 16. We muſt not only repent, but be *zealous* and repent, *Rev.* 3. 9. We muſt not only love, but *be ſick of love*, Cant. 2. 5.

Horat. ——*Multa tulit, ſudavit, & alſit.*——

This is to be a Chriſtian to purpoſe, when we put forth all our vi-
Mat. 11. 11. gour and fervour in Religion, and take the Kingdom of God as it were

were by ſtorm. 'Tis not a faint velleity will bring us to Heaven, there muſt not only be *wiſhing* but working, and we muſt ſo work, as being damned if we come ſhort.

Uſe 1. Information. *Uſe* 1. *Information.*

1 *Branch.* Hence learn, that there are but few good Chriſtians; oh how few make Religion their buſineſs! is he an Artificer that never wrought in the trade? is he a Chriſtian that never wrought in the trade of Godlineſs? How few make Religion their buſineſs! *Branch* 1.

1. Some make *Religion* a *complement*, but not their buſineſs; they court Religion by a *profeſſion*, and if need be Religion ſhall have their letters of commendation, but they do not make Religion their buſineſs. Many of Chriſts Diſciples, who ſaid, *Lord, evermore give us this bread*; yet ſoon after baſely deſerted Chriſt, and would follow him no longer, *Joh.* 6. 66, *From that time many of his Diſciples went back, and walked no more with him.* Joh. 6. 34.

2. Others make the *world* their buſineſs, *Phil.* 3. 19, *Who mind earthly things.* The earth puts out the fire; ſo the love of earthly things puts out the fire of heavenly affections. It was a judgment upon *Korah* and *Dathan*, Numb. 16. 22, the *earth ſwallowed them up.* Thus it is with many; the world ſwallows up their time, thoughts, diſcourſe; they are ſwallowed up alive in the earth. There is a lawful uſe of theſe things, but the ſin is in the *exceſs.* The Bee may ſuck a little honey from the leaf, but put it in a barrel of honey, and it is drown'd. How many ingulph themſelves in the Creature, and drive ſuch a Trade in the Shop, that they quite break in their Trading for Heaven? The Farm and Oxen have kept millions from Chriſt. Theſe do not make Religion their buſineſs, but make the world their buſineſs; and what will all be at death, but as a dream, or fancy? *Hab.* 2. 13, *The people ſhall labour in the fire, and weary themſelves for very vanity.* Σκιὰ γὰρ ὄναρ τὰ τέτων ἀδαμάντες.

2 *Branch.* Hence ſee how hard it is to be ſaved! 'Tis not ſo eaſie as ſome apprehend, *Religion muſt be our buſineſs.* 'Tis not enough to have a ſmack of Religion, a touch and away, *Canis ad nilum*——but we muſt make it our τὸ ἔργον, *our buſineſs.* How many precepts have we to obey, how many temptations to reſiſt, how many graces to treaſure up? Religion is the work of our whole lives, and all little enough; Lord then how hard is it to be ſaved? *Where will the ſinner appear?* What will become of the Gallants of our times, who make *ſin* their buſineſs, whoſe whole employment is to endulg and pamper the fleſh? φιλήδονοι μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόθεοι. All their care is (as *Hierom* ſpeaks) to criſp their hair, to ſparkle their Diamonds; inſtead of ſteeping their ſouls in briniſh tears, they bathe themſelves in perfumed waters, and ride to Hell upon the back of pleaſure. 2 *Branch.* *Quibus cura eſt ut veſtes bene oleant, ut digite annulis radient, ut crines calamiſtro rotentur.* Hier.

Uſe 2. Let us deal impartially with our own ſouls, and put our ſelves upon a ſtrict trial before the Lord, whether we make Religion our buſineſs? And for our better progreſs herein, I ſhall lay down ten Signs and Characters of a man that makes Religion his buſineſs, and by theſe, as by a Goſpel-Touchſtone, we may try our ſelves. *Uſe* 2. *Trial.*

1 *Charact.* ἐν τῷ φανερῷ.

1. He who makes Religion his business, doth not place his Religion only in Externals. *Rom.* 2. 28, *He is not a Jew who is one outwardly.* Religion doth not stand only in forms and shadows; this is to give God leaves instead of fruit. 'Tis often seen, that the *pomp* of worship destroys the *purity*, as the paint of Glass hinders the light: And 'tis no untruth to say, that formality may as well damn as prophaneness. A superstitious *Pharisee* may as well be in Hell as a drunken Epicure. A Christians main work lies with his heart. He that makes Religion his business, gives God the *Vitals*, he worships him *in spirit and in truth*, Joh. 4. 24. In stilling the *spirits* are strongest. The good Christian distills out the spirits for God. *Aaron* must offer the fat upon the Altar, *He shall offer an offering made by fire, the fat that covereth the inwards.* Vers. 16, *All the fat is the Lords.* If *Aaron* had offered the skin instead of the fat, it would not have been accepted. External devotion alone, is offering the skin; and they that give God only the skin of duty, shall carry away only the shell of comfort.

2 *Charact.*

2 *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, avoids every thing that may be a *remora* and hindrance to him in his work. A wicked man cares not whether the matter of Religion goes forward or backward; he stands in the way of temptation; and as if sin did not come fast enough, he *draws it as with a Cart-rope*, Isa. 5. 18. But he who makes Religion his business, flies from temptation, and while he is running the heavenly race, *lays aside every weight of sin which doth so easily beset him*, Heb. 12. 1. A man may as well miss of Heaven by loytering in the way, as by losing the way, 1 *Sam.* 21. 8, *The Kings business required haste*; so the business of Religion requires haste; therefore the good Christian is careful that he be not taken off the work, and so be taken tardy in it.

Isa. 5. 18.

3 *Charact.*

3 *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, hath a care to preserve conscience inviolable, and had rather offend all the world than offend his conscience, 2 *Tim.* 1. 3, *I thank God whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience.* Much of Religion lies in Conscience. Faith is a precious Jewel, but Conscience is the Cabinet where this Jewel must be kept, 1 *Tim.* 3. 9, *Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.* Love is a beautiful flower, but this flower most grows in the garden of a pure Conscience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5, *Charity out of a pure conscience.* So sacred a thing is Conscience; without this all Religion drops in pieces. He who makes Religion his business, labours to get Conscience regulated by Scripture, (as the Watch is set by the Dial) and having done this, he keeps his Conscience as his *eye*, that no dust of sin fall into it.

O felix conscientiæ Paradisus, bonorum operum virgultis consita, variisque virtutum floribus purpurata. Aug. *ad fratr. in eremo. Tom.* 10.

4 *Charact.*

4 *Character.* He who makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon all his civil actions.

1. Religion hath an influence upon his *eating and drinking*; he holds the golden bridle of temperance, he eats sparingly. The godly man feeds not to please the sensual appetite, but that he may (as *Chrysostom* saith) by the strength he receives from the Creature μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ πνευματικῇ ἐργασίᾳ σπουδὴν ἐπισχυσαι, be the more fit for the chearful discharge of spiritual services: He makes not his food fuel for lust, but help to duty. Epicures dig their own grave with their teeth; they *feed without fear*, Jud. vers. 12,

ἐκ ἐσθίετε ἀπὸ τὰ ἀμέτρως ἀνηραγίας τὰ μύρια ἐπαγόμενα νοσήματα. Chrysost. Psal. 69. 22.

Irre-

Irregulares gulares. Sinners fear not lest their *Table should be a snare*; they fear not the *process of justice*; while the Wine is in the Cup, they fear not the *hand-writing on the Wall.* But the godly man being regulated by Religion, *puts a knife to his throat*, Prov. 23. 2, that he may cut the throat of intemperance.

2. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his *recreation.* The strings of the Viol must sometimes be slackned lest they break; *Neque semper arcum tendit Apollo.*——God affords his people generous delights; the Scripture allows the use of the Bow, 2 *Sam.* 1. 18. But we are apt to offend most in lawful things; more are killed with Wine than with poyson. Religion sits Moderator in the soul. The man influenced by Religion dares not make *play* an *occupation*; 'tis oyl to quicken him in Gods service, not a Sea to ingulph him. He who is devoted to Religion, puts bounds to the *Olympian* sports; he knows where to make his stops and periods; he sets up an *Herculis Columna*, on which he writes, *non ultra*, no *further than this.*

3. He that makes Religion his business, Religion hath an influence upon his *buying and selling.* The wicked get a livelihood often by cozening; sometimes they *embase* commodities, *Amos* 8. 6, *They sell the refuse of the Wheat.* They would pick out the best grains of Corn, and then sell the rest; sometimes they *falsifie* their weights, *Hos.* 12. 7, *He is a Merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand.* But he who makes Religion his business, is regulated by it in the Shop; he is just in his dealings; he dares not hold the Book of God in one hand, and false weights in the other; he is faithful to his neighbour, and makes as much reckoning of the *Ten Commandments*, as of his *Creed.*

4. Religion hath an influence upon his *Marrying.* He labours to graft upon a Religious stock; he is not so ambitious of *Parentage* as *Piety*; nor is his care so much to espouse dowry as virtue *: In a word, he seeks for a *meet help*, one that may help him up the hill to Heaven: this is marrying *in the Lord.* That marriage indeed is *honourable* *, when the Husband is joyned to one who is the *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, 1 Cor. 6. 19. Here is the man that makes Religion his business, who in all his civil transactions is steered, and influenced by Religion: Religion is the universal ingredient.

* Καὶ γυναῖκα ἀγόμεθα μὴ χρημάτων οὐδὲ οὐσίας μηδὲ προγόνων ἐπιφάνειαν ἀλλὰ τρόπον ἀρίστης λαμβάνομεν καὶ ὁπηκόαν. Chrys.

* Heb. 13. 6.

5. He who makes Religion his business, is good in his calling and relation; relative grace doth much grace Religion; I shall suspect his goodness, who herein is excentrical: some will pray and discourse well, but it appears they never made Religion their business, but took it up rather *for ostentation* than as an *occupation*, because they are defective in relative duties; they are bad husbands, bad children, *&c.* If one should draw a picture, and leave out the eye, it would much eclipse and take from the beauty of the picture: to fail in a relation, stains the honour of profession. He who makes Religion his business, is like a Star shining in the proper orb and station wherein God hath set him.

5 *Charact.*

6. He who makes Religion his business, hath a care of his company, he dares not twist into a cord of friendship with sinners, *Psal.* 26. 4, *I have not sat with vain persons*: Diamonds will not cement with rubbish. 'Tis dangerous to intermingle with the wicked, lest their breath prove infectious:

6 *Charact.*

Sin is very catching, *Psal.* 106. 35, 36, *They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works, and served their Idols, which were a snare unto them.* Epictetus. Ἀναγκὴ ἢ παδὸν, ἢ μαδὸν τὸ κυκλον: if you mingle bright and rusty armour together, the rusty will not be made bright, but the bright will be made rusty. He who makes Religion his business, likes not to be near them, whose nearness sets him further off from God, and whose imbraces, like those of the Spider, are to suck out the precious life. The godly man ingrafts into the *Communion of Saints*, and hereby, as the Siens he partakes of the sap and virtue of their grace: he who makes it his business to get to Heaven, associates only with those who may make him better, or whom he may make better.

7 Charact. ἄσης ἡμὶν ἀγρυπνείας χρείαι. 7. He who makes Religion his business, keeps his spiritual watch always by him. 1. He watcheth his *eye*, Job 31. 1, *I have made a covenant with mine eyes.* When *Dinah* was *gadding*, she was defiled, *Gen.* 34. 1. When the eye is gadding by impure glances, the heart is defiled. 2. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *thoughts*, lest they should turn to froth, *Jer.* 4. 24, *How long shall vain thoughts lodg within thee?* What a world of sin is minted in the fancy! a child of God sets a spy over his thoughts, he summons them in, and *captivates them to the obedience of Christ*, 2 Cor. 10. 5. 3. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *passions*; Passion is like Gunpowder, which the Devil setting on fire, blows up the soul. *Jonah* in a passion quarrels with the Almighty, *Jon.* 4. 1, 9. He who is devoted to Religion, watcheth his passions, lest the tyde growing high, *reason* should be carried down the stream, and be drowned in it. 4. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *duties*, Mat. 26. 41, *Watch and Pray.* First, he doth watch *in* prayer: the heart is subject to *remisness*; if it be not dead in sin, it will be dead in prayer; a Christian watcheth, lest he should abate his fervour in duty; he knows if the strings of his spiritual Viol slacken, he cannot *make melody in his heart to the Lord.* Secondly, he doth watch *after* prayer; as a man is most careful of himself when he comes out of an hot bath, the pores being then most open and subject to cold: so a Christian is most careful when he comes from an Ordinance, lest his heart should decoy him into sin; therefore when he hath prayed, he sets a watch: he deals with his heart as the *Jews* dealt with Christs sepulchre, *Mat.* 27. 66, *They made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.* A good Christian having been at the Word and Sacrament, (that sealing Ordinance) after the *sealing* he *sets a watch.* 5. He who makes Religion his business, watcheth his *temptations*: Temptation is the scout the Devil sends out to discover our forces; 'tis the train he lays to blow up our grace. Satan ever lies at the catch, he hath his *depths*, Revel. 2. 24; his *methods*, Ephes. 4. 14; his *devices*, 2 Cor. 2. 11; he is continually fishing for our souls, and if Satan be angling, we had need be watching: He who makes religion his business, is full of holy excubation, he lies sentinel, and with the Prophet *stands upon his watch-tower*, Hab. 2. 1. *Solomon* saith of a virtuous Woman, *Her candle goes not out by night*, Prov. 31. 18.

Col. 3. 16.

Βάδη μεθοδίας νοήματος

The

the good Christian keeps his watch-Candle alwayes burning.

8. He who makes Religion his business, every day casts up his accounts to see how things go in his soul. *Solomon* saith, *Know the state of thy flocks*, Prov. 27. 23. A man that makes Religion his work, is careful to know the state of his soul; before the Lord brings him to a tryal, he brings himself to a tryal; he had rather use the *looking-glass* of the word to see his own heart, than put on the broad spectacles of censure to see anothers fault: he plays the Critick upon himself, he searcheth what sin is in his heart unrepented of; and having found it out, he labours by his tears, as by *the waters of jealousie*, to make the thigh of sin to rot: He searcheth whether he have grace or no, and he trys whether it be genuine or spurious; he is as much afraid of painted holiness, as he is of going to a painted Heaven: He traverseth things in his soul, and will never leave, till that question, *Whether he be in the faith*, be put out of question: Here is the man making Religion his business; he is loth to be a spiritual bankrupt, therefore is still calling himself to account, and wherein he comes short, he gets Christ to be his surety. 8 *Charact.* Lam. 3. 40. *Seneca.* Numb. 5. 22. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

9. He who makes Religion his business, will be religious whatever it cost him: He is a resolved man, *Psalm* 116. 109, *I have sworn I will keep thy righteous judgments.* There are some who *will* be rich, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. and there are some who *will* be godly, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. He that makes Religion his business, will not (as *Luther* saith) be put off with other things, he can want health, riches, friends, but he cannot want Christ or Grace; *he will be godly*: let the times be what they will, they shall not take him off the work of Religion, he will follow Christ *upon the water*, the floods of persecution cannot drown his zeal; he doth not say, *There is a Lion in the way*, he will wrestle with difficulties, march in the face of death. The Christians of the Primitive Church cried out to the Persecutor, Hew us in pieces, burn us, we will never worship your Idols: these were in good earnest for Heaven. There is a great deal of difference between them who go to sea for pleasure, and those Mariners who are to go a voyage to the *East-Indies*: The first upon the least storm retreat back to shore; but they who are imbarqued for a voyage, hold on their course, though the Sea be rough and stormy, and will venture their lives in hope of the Golden harvest at the *Indies*. Hypocrites seem religious when things are serene and calm, but they will not sail in a storm: Those only who make Religion their business, will hold out their voyage to Heaven in the midst of tempests, and death-threatning dangers. 9 *Charact.* *Ure, tunde, divelle, Idola tua non adorabimus*, Tertul.

10. He that makes Religion his business, lives every day as his last day; he prays in the morning, as if he were to die at night; he lives as if he were presently to be called to Gods bar; he walks *soberly, righteously, godly*; he *girds his loins, trims his lamp*, sets his house in order, that when death comes for him with an *Habeas Corpus*, 10 *Charact.* Tit. 2. 14.

Corpus, he may have nothing to do but to die. Behold here the man who makes Religion his buſineſs.

Uſe. 3. *Exhortation.* *Uſe.* 3. Let me perſwade all you whoſe conſciences may ſmite you for former neglects, *now* ſet upon the work, make Religion your buſineſs; contend, *tanquam pro aris & focis*, beſtir your ſelves in this, as in a matter of life and death. *Queſt. But how muſt we do to make Religion our buſineſs? Anſw.* That you may be ſerious in this work, I ſhall lay down ſeveral Rules for your help and direction herein.

Queſt. *Anſw.* Rules for making Religion our buſineſs.

1. *Rule.* 1. If you would make Religion your buſineſs, poſſeſs your ſelves with this maxime, That Religion is the end of your Creation. God never ſent men into the world only to eat and drink, and put on fine cloaths; but the end of their creation is to honour him, 1 *Pet.* 4. 11, *That God in all things may be glorfied:* Should the body only be tended and looked after, this were to trim the *ſcabbard* inſtead of the *blade*; it were to invert and fruſtrate the very end of our being.

2. *Rule.* Δεῖν τὴν δεῖν εἶναι. 2. If you would make Religion your buſineſs, get a change of heart wrought; breathe after a principle of holineſs: he cannot make Religion his buſineſs, who hath no Religion. Can the body move without a principle of life? Chriſtian, get thy heart ſpirituallized by grace; an earthly heart will no more trade in Heaven, than a Mill-ſtone will aſcend, or a Serpent fly in the air: the heart muſt be divinely touched with the Spirit, as the needle with the load-ſtone, ere it can cleave to God, and *follow him fully*; never expect the practice to be holy, till firſt there be an holy principle.

Numb. 14. 24.

3. *Rule.* 3. If you will make Religion your buſineſs, ſet your ſelves always under the eye of God. The Maſters eye makes the ſervant work; Gods eye will quicken our devotion, *Pſal.* 16. 8, *I have ſet the Lord always before me.* If we leave off work, or loyter in our work, *God ſees*, he hath a caſement opens into our breaſts; this ὀφθαλμὸς ἀκοίμητος, (as *Chryſoſtome* calls it) this eye of God that never ſleeps would, make us active in the ſphere of duty: if indeed Gods eye were at any time off us, we might ſlacken our pace in Religion, but he is ever looking on; if we *take the wings of the morning*, we cannot fly from his preſence; and he who is now the ſpectator, will be the judg; O how would this conſideration of Gods omniſciency keep us from being truants in Religion! how would it infuſe a ſpirit of activity and gallantry into us, making us put forward with all our might in the race to Heaven!

Intereſt animis noſtris, & cogitationibus mediis intervenit, Seneca.

Pſal. 139. 9.

4. *Rule.* 4. If you would make Religion your buſineſs, think often of the ſhortneſs of time; this life is but a *vapour*, Jam. 4. 9. a *ſhadow*, 1 *Chron.* 29. 15. 'tis אין *as nothing*, Pſal. 39. 5. ὁ βίος τέχος. we are wheeling apace out of the world, and there's no work to be done for our ſouls in the grave: *Eccleſ.* 9. 2: *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work nor device in the grave whither thou goeſt.* Now is the time of life, now is the day of grace, you know not

Cito pedo præterit ætas —— Ovid. Phocylides.

not how ſoon theſe two Suns may ſet: The ſhorter our life, the ſwifter ſhould be our pace.

5. If you would make Religion your buſineſs, get an underſtanding heart, weigh things ſeriouſly in the balance of reaſon and judgment. Think of the infinite importance of this buſineſs, our eternal miſery or happineſs depends upon it: other things are but for *convenience*, this is of *neceſſity*: if this work be not done, we are undone; if we do not the work which believers are doing, we muſt do the work which Devils are doing: and if God give us a ſerious heart, to lay out our ſelves in the buſineſs of Religion, our *income* will be greater than our *expence*. Religion is a good Trade if it be well followed; it will quit the coſt; 'tis working in ſilver, 1 *Pet.* 1. 9, *Receiving the end of your faith, the ſalvation of your ſouls*. God will ſhortly take us from the working-houſe to the Throne, and will ſet upon our head a freſh Garland made of the flowers of Paradiſe. 5. *Rule.* μὴ ϱύγης τὸν κεμάτον. ἵνα τόχης τὸν ϛέφανον. Chryſ.

6. If you would make Religion your buſineſs, implore the help of Gods Spirit. All we can do is but loſt labour, unleſs the Spirit excite and accelerate. Beg a gale from Heaven, *Cant.* 4. *ult. Awake, O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden*, &c. If the Spirit joyn with our Chariot, then we move to Heaven ſwiftly, as *the Roe upon the mountains*, or as *the Charets of Aminidab*. 6. *Rule.* Cant. 6. 12.

Now having laid down the Rules, let me for a concluſion preſs all Chriſtians to this great duty of making Religion their buſineſs; and I will uſe but two weighty conſiderations.

1. The ſweetneſs that is in Religion; *all her paths are pleaſantneſs*, Prov. 3. 17. The way of Religion is ſtrowed with Roſes, in regard of that inward peace God gives, *Pſal.* 19. 11, *In keeping thy precepts there is great reward*. This is ſuch a labour as hath delight in it: as while the mother tends her child, and ſometimes beyond her ſtrength too, yet finds a ſecret delight in it; ſo while a Chriſtian is ſerving God, there's that inward contentment and delight infuſed, and he meets with ſuch transfigurations of ſoul, that he thinks himſelf half in Heaven. 'Twas Chriſts *meat and drink* to do his Fathers will, *Joh.* 4. 34. *Religion was* St. *Pauls recreation*, Rom. 7. 22. Though I ſhould not ſpeak of wages, the vails God gives us in this life, is enough to make us in love with his ſervice. 1. *Motive.*

2. The ſecond and laſt conſideration is, That millions of perſons have miſcarried to eternity, for want of making Religion their buſineſs: they have ſomething in Religion, but not to purpoſe: they have begun, but have made too many ſtops and pauſes: they have been luke warm and neutral in the buſineſs; they have ſerved God as if they ſerved him not; they have ſinned fervently, but prayed faintly; Religion hath been a thing only by the *bye*; they have ſerved God by fits and ſtarts, but have not made Religion *their buſineſs*, therefore have miſcarried to all eternity. If you could ſee a wicked mans Tombſtone 2. *Motive.*

Tombstone in Hell, you might read this Inscription upon it; *Here lies one in Hellish flames, for not making Religion his business.* How many Ships have suffered shipwrack, notwithstanding all their glorious names of the *Hope*, the *Safe-guard*, the *Triumph*? so how many souls, notwithstanding their glorious title of Saintship, have suffered shipwrack in Hell for ever, because they have not made Religion their business?

VVhether

VVhether well compoſed Religious Vows do not exceedingly promote Religion?

Pſal. CXVI. ver. 12, 14.

What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?
I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the preſence of all his people.

DAVID was no *Popiſh votary*; nor were the *Vows* he is now about to *pay*, like the *Vows* of *Popiſh* and *Superſtitious votaries*, either in the *Matter* of them, or in the *Object* of them, nor in the *Manner* or *End* of them; *and I hope you* who read theſe lines are, as the greateſt part of my Auditors were, *far* enough *from liking* of *ſuch Vows* in others, and *from lying under the enſnaring tye* of any ſuch Vow *your ſelves*. Since then there is ſuch unlikeneſs hoped from you, juſtifie the unlikeneſs and diſparity between my diſcourſe and theirs, whoſe buſineſs is either to ſtate and maintain *Monkiſh vows*, or to ſtate and overthrow them; the one the work of Popiſh, the other the work of Proteſtant Writers. *In the words* which I have choſen, we have *a fit occaſion to ſtate our own caſe by* Davids, who was *mindful of his debt* to the Lord, and the *more careful* to diſcharge it, *becauſe* it was *due by Vow*.

Two things noted will be a Key to open the words, ſo far as we at preſent are concerned in them.

1. *That the ſum of all our Religion, is our rendring to the Lord.* I might ſo define Religion, and with theſe qualifications, that it be done in right and due manner, in right and proper matter, it would amount to a definition of the True Religion: *All* the *Religions which men* have in the vanity and blindneſs of their minds *ſuperſtitiouſly* and *idolatrouſly adhered to, have been* nothing elſe but their *Rendring to* their *ſuppoſed gods*,

according to their apprehenſions and erroneous thoughts, *and* the *rendring to the true God in a true and right manner, is the ſum of true Religion.*

Matt. 22. 21. This Notion is conſonant to the Scriptures: Thus *Matt.* 22. ver. 21, *Give unto God the things that are Gods:* as true loyalty is a giving to *Cæſar*

Matt. 21. 41. the things that are *Cæſars*, ſo *true Piety* is the *giving to God the things that are Gods.* And ſo in that Parable of the Vineyard let out to husbandmen; *All we owe to God*, is expreſſed by the *rendring the fruit of the Vineyard*; particular Acts of Religion are ſo expreſſed too in the

* Pſal. 56. 12 Hoſ. 14. 2. 2 Chron. 34. 25. * Scriptures. Let this then be the import of *David's* מה אשיב ליי *what ſhall I render to the Lord?* in what things? and by what means ſhall I promote Religion in the exerciſe thereof? How ſhall I ſhew my ſelf duly Religious toward him who hath been conſtantly and abundantly munificent in his benefits towards me?

The ſecond thing to be *noted* is this, that *David ſo ordered his vows*, that *he could pay them*; and *in paying them, did ſo render to the Lord*, as *that Religion was promoted* and furthered; *He* had *ſo engaged* himſelf by vow, that *he could ſay, I will pay*; *And his vows* were ſuch as were *a fit Anſwer* to that enquiry, *What ſhall I render to the Lord? David* had very *well compoſed* his vow, it lay within his compaſs, *he could* perform it, and in performing *he paid Tribute* and did homage *to the Lord*; in keeping his vow he gave unto the Lord.

Now put theſe *two notes* together, and they are *reſolved* in this Doctrinal *poſition*,

Doctr. *Vows, ſo made, as we can ſay we will pay them; and ſo made, that in paying them we render to the Lord, do much advance and promote Religion.* Or in the words of that Caſe of Conſcience now to be ſtated, *Well compoſed vows do much promote Religion.*

Who ſo doth engage himſelf by a well ordered vow, doth ſet his Religion in the whole, or in ſome particular part of it in very good forwardneſs. Religion is a gainer by this bargain well made; the Bond is to God, but Religion receives the intereſt at leaſt: *Well compoſed vows* are *Religion's engines*, able *to move* the *weightier burthens* and loads, *and fit to be only employed in them.*

In handling farther this Caſe, we muſt enquire,

1. What a Vow is, that we may know of what we ſpeak?
2. Whether a Vow may lawfully be made by us?
3. When it is well compoſed for Religion's advantage?
4. How much it furthereth Religion?
5. Whence this influence of a Vow upon Religious perſons?
6. What proper uſe to make of the Poſition?

1. *General.* *Eſt promiſſio Religioſa ſanctè facta Deo,* Szegedin. *loc. Com.* *A Vow is a voluntary and deliberate Promiſe made unto God in an extraordinary caſe. It is a Religious promiſe made unto God in a holy manner*; ſo a Modern Writer defines it. It is a * *Holy and Religious pro-*

* *Eſt ſancta & Religioſa promiſſio Deo conſultò & ſponte, facta ad aliquid faciendum vel omittendum quod illi gratum & acceptum fore conſtat.* Bucan. *loc. Com.* 45.

miſe

miſe adviſedly and freely made unto God, either to do or to omit ſomewhat which appeareth to be grateful and well-pleaſing unto him. So *Bucanus.* I forbear *Aquinas* his definition of a Vow: If theſe I have given ſatisfie not, then view it in the words of *Peter Martyr*, a man of repute, and well known to our own Nation in the days of *Edward* the ſixth of ever bleſſed memory; (a) *It is a Holy Promiſe, whereby we bind our ſelves to offer ſomewhat unto God.* There is one more who defines it, and he is a man whoſe judgment, Learning and Holineſs hath perfumed his Name, it is Learned *Perkins* in his *Caſes of Conſcience. A Vow* (ſaith he) *is a Promiſe made unto God of Things Lawful and Poſſible.*

a *Eſt ſancta promiſſio quâ nos obſtringimus Deo aliquid oblaturos eſſe.* Pet. Mart. *loc. com. de votis.*

Of theſe five deſcriptions of a Vow, you may indifferently chuſe which you will, for when you have choſen either of them, and looked upon it, you will find it lays an obligation upon the perſon vowing, and binds him ſtrictly, and unalterably to perform his Vows: for *it is* (1.) *a promiſe* (b), it is not a purpoſe, not a ſingle reſolution, much leſs is it the deliberation of the mind concerning a matter not yet determined, but determinable on either part. A Vow is a Promiſe which had its beginning in a ſerious, due, and thorow Deliberation, which from Deliberation paſſed into a Rational, ſtrong and fixed purpoſe of doing what had been ſo deliberated and weighed: Nay further yet, a Vow paſſeth into a formal and expreſs Promiſe, and ſo makes the votary a debtor. This part of a Vow *Solomon* hath long ſince prepared to our hands, *Eccleſ.* 5. *ver.* 6, *Suffer not thy mouth to cauſe thy fleſh to ſin, neither ſay thou before the Angel that it was error.* Note what *Solomon* forbids, *viz.* c *Offend not by raſh vowing:* Nor ſeek excuſe by ſaying (d) *it was an error*, i. e. *through miſtake and imprudence thou haſt vowed, not obſerving what thou didſt when thou vowedſt.* It muſt be a deliberate and adviſed act of a man, if he will duly vow to God. (2.) *It is* ſaid to be *voluntary*; the thing ſpeaks it ſelf, *a Vow* muſt be *free*, it is injurious to extort a promiſe from a man; free choice ſhould be the ſpring of every promiſe, much more of every Vow. The old Law impowered ſome perſons to diſannul the Vow of another, but no Law or reaſon can impower any one to enforce a Vow upon another, each one may forbear to vow, *Deut.* 23. *ver.* 22. (3.) As it muſt be voluntarily and deliberate, ſo *it muſt be to God alone*; we read ſtill, *if thou wilt vow, thou ſhalt vow to the Lord:* Not to Angels, with ſuch as worſhip them; not to Saints with ſuperſtitious Papiſts; not to any man; man may promiſe ſolemnly unto man, but he may not Vow: man may be the witneſs of thy Vow, but man may not be the object. For the dependance of man upon man, is not great enough to warrant the one in vowing, or the other in expecting ſuch a Vow; beſide that, we muſt not vow to one, we muſt not pray to, nor can we expect help from man in caſes that are juſt ground for, and which do require a Vow from us. Which caſes, (4.) *I ſay, are extraordinary*, and more than uſual, either from *received mercy, or hoped* and expected *mercy*; It is impoſſible he

b Deut. 23. 23.

c *Ne committas temerè vovendo.* Mercer. *in loc.*

d *Neq; dixeris te per errorem & imprudentiam voviſſe, nec adverriſſe quid faceres dum viveres.* Mercer. *in loc.*

ſhould well compoſe his Vows, or duly pay them, who makes ordinary and daily caſes ground of his Vows; we cannot but forget many an ordinary mercy received; but we may not, muſt not forget any Vow made: *We muſt pray for every mercy we want*, but *we may not bind our ſelves in the bonds of a Vow, for every mercy we pray for*, this would inevitably caſt us upon the ſin of falſehood and unfaithfulneſſes in our Vows.

But I proceed to *the ſecond thing* to be *enquired into*, that is, *Whether* it be *lawful in any caſe for us* now *under* the *New-Teſtament to make a Vow?* That it was lawful for the *Jew*, none have doubted; but ſome *doubt* is *made, whether a Chriſtian may voluntarily bind himſelf to God by making a Vow?* The ſolution of this doubt is neceſſary to our clearer determination of this Caſe: for if Vows were now unlawful to us, they could neither be well-compoſed, nor could they advantage Religion; and if it may appear they may lawfully be made, then we may go on in the conſideration of the remaining particulars. To this ſecond then very briefly we anſwer, *That a Chriſtian may lawfully make a promiſe or Vow unto God, binding himſelf more than ordinarily unto God for, and in expectation of mercy, in ſome or other more than ordinary caſe or exigency.* For a great mercy received already, a Chriſtian may vow thankfulneſs; for a mercy not received but expected, he may vow upon the receipt to render the Lord more than uſual duty. *Such Vows at this day may be uſed by us, ſo often as the Lord hath delivered us from any deſtruction, or dangerous diſeaſe, or from any danger*, ſaith *Calvin*, ſpeaking of Vows for mercy to be received. And Mr. *Perkins* in his Caſes of conſcience, *both* affirms what we now do, *and* anſwers the Objections made to the contrary. But leave we men, and come to Reaſon; why it is lawful for us to vow.

2. General.

Ejuſmodi vota hodie quoq; nobis in uſu eſſe poſſunt, quoties nos Dominus vel à clade aliqua, vel à morbo difficili, vel ab alio quovis diſcrimine eripuit. Calvin. *inſtit.* l. 4. c. 13.

1. *What* is *not evil in it ſelf, nor evil by accident*, *(unleſs made evil by the undue ordering of it through our fault) *may lawfully be done by us.* I know this well conſidered, proves it ſelf; yet I would confirm it with this obſervation: What is not evil, may lawfully be done by us; now things are evil either *per ſe*, or *per accidens*; If Vows be either way evil, it is by accident, which accidental evil may be prevented, and indeed is by due compoſing of Vows, and by diligent performing of them when compoſed. So that if a Chriſtian may order the making and performing his Vows, ſo as to prevent the evil which attends a Vow ill-made; then ſuch a Chriſtian may ſurely make a Vow very lawfully. But I preſume no one will doubt, that he who makes Vows *ſeldom*, *conſultedly*, and *ſincerely*, may duly keep them, and in ſo doing, prevent any conſequent evil.

* 1. Vows well-ordered not ſin in themſelves, nor by accident.

2. Some Vows once lawful on moral grounds, Such lawful ſtill.

2. Vows may be lawfully made now by us Chriſtians, becauſe *what was lawful to the Jew on Moral conſiderations, and not on any Ceremonial conſiderations, that is alſo lawful now unto us Chriſtians.* Let it be noted; I do not ſay what was once lawful to them, is now lawful unto us: for it was

lawful

lawful for them to ſacrifice, it is not now lawful unto us: But I ſay, what was once on Moral grounds lawful to them, is now lawful to us, becauſe the morality of the thing (which is ſuppoſed the ground of this Vow) is the ſame to them and us. It was lawful for *Jacob* on Moral motives to engage himſelf more cloſely to God, if God would indeed be with him; It is as lawful for any of us on the ſame occaſion, and for the like motive, to vow unto God. *Jacob* was moved to it, leſt he ſhould be found leſs than ordinarily thankful for a more than ordinary providence and mercy to him: So may you or I; * *For it is not abhorrent to the duty of a pious man, at ſuch time to conſecrate (as a ſolemn teſtimony of his acknowledgment) an offering by Vow, leſt he ſhould ſeem unthankful for his bounty. If there* were then *Vota moralia, Vows* that were *moral in their matter, manner, motives*, and *ends*; and that ſuch there were, *Job*'s covenant with his eyes, and *David*'s ſwearing to keep Gods Commandments, prove to us; either we muſt ſay they did what was unlawful, or elſe we cannot make ſuch Moral Vows (which is not rational to ſuppoſe) or elſe yielding ſuch Vows ſo made to be lawful to them, they are ſo to us.

But thirdly, Vows may lawfully be made by us Chriſtians, for *it is a kind of thankfulneſs and acknowledgment made to God, with the univerſal approbation and conſent of men.* It is ſuch a chief Rent that no Nation in the world putting a value on Gods godneſs, and putting a difference between great and little dangers, between great and little bleſſings, but did conſtantly approve this way of preventing great dangers, by great Vows, and reſenting great bleſſings, by liks vowed praiſes. Thus addreſſing themſelves in a more than ordinary manner to their gods, on more than ordinary exigences: And if I muſt bring my witneſſes to depoſe for the truth, one ſpeaks in *Engliſh* thus, *Vows was uſed frequently by all Nations and people beſet with danger.* Another learned Pen at once intimateth the univerſality of the cuſtom, and cenſureth the vanity and blind folly of the Heathens, in their Vows to their Idol-gods, Hence *the* * *follies and monſtrous abſurdities of the Heathens in their Vows, wherewith they did too inſolently abuſe their gods.* It were endleſs to attempt what teſtimonies might be gathered up in this point: but by theſe it is apparent, that thankfulneſs is a debt which all Nations apprehended might and ought to be enſured to God by Vow. So that hence I would collect, that as gratitude is not only lawful, but a duty imprinted on the ſoul of man; ſo this high degree of gratitude is a Copy or Tranſcript of that Original: It is lawful doubtleſs to us to be thankful in the higheſt degree. Now the return of more than ordinary duty, for more than ordinary mercy, is the higheſt, and is the Vow we ſpeak of.

Fourthly, *Unleſs ſuch Vows may be accounted lawful to us, I cannot ſee how we have any way of making free, voluntary, and extraordinary acknowledgments unto God.* For ſince all duty is commanded, and ſo determined as to matter and manner ordinarily, that the Law preſcribes, and enjoins them, and we may not ſuperadd any thing to the Law; yet ſometime more than ordinary mercy gives us command to be more than ordinary in our acknowledgments; which ſince it may not be by doing any thing not commanded, muſt

* *Neq; enim à pii hominis officio, tunc abhorret votivam oblationem, velut ſolenne recognitionis Symbolum conſecrare ne ingratus erga benignitatem ejus videatur.* Calv. Inſtit. l. 4. c. 13. 3 Vows by general conſent of Nations approved.

Quid enim niſi Vota ſuperſunt. Ovid. *Votum omnibus gentibus & populis in periculo conſtitutis uſitatum.* Szegedin. *loc. com. de Votis.*

* *Hinc illa votorum ineptiæ, imo prodigioſæ abſurditates apud Ethnicos, quibus nimis inſolentur cum diis ſuis luſerunt.* Calvin. Inſtit. l. 4. c. 13 4. Vows the only Goſpel-free-will-offering extraordinary.

muſt be done by adding our own promiſe and word, to have more than our ordinary care was, or otherwiſe would have been, to do what is commanded; or elſe it muſt be left undone as unlawful, which is in the iſſue to leave us without any way of binding our ſelves to acknowledgments, ſuited to extraordinary providences. In a word, Seeing the Law of God is the ſtanding rule of our daily obedience, and is the ſame unchanged rule of our daily duties; but withal the mercies and varieties of Providences are a Law likewiſe to us Chriſtians, and when great, require great and ſuitable deportment in us. We muſt have ſome way, and that lawful, to meaſure out our reſentments, which can be no other, but the laying bonds and voluntary obligations on our ſelves unto God, which is the ſame with this Vow. Either there muſt be ſome ſuch lawful way, or elſe great providential mercies which call for greater returns, and are a real Law to us, cannot be duly obſerved and obeyed. Now I know riches of Grace in the Goſpel have not ſo intrenched on, or done injury to Providences. I know that as Grace is no enemy to the ſtanding Law, nor patronizeth licentiouſneſs; ſo neither is Grace an enemy to Providence, nor warranteth any one to overlook the greatneſs and extraordinary mercy in any providences; or to be careleſs and ſleight in anſwering them with unſuitable returns of thankfulneſs. But,

5 Vows beſt enſure duty, and enſnare not us.

Fifthly, *That is lawful to us Chriſtians, which doth moſt certainly enſure our duty to God, yet doth not enſnare us in the enſuring of it.* That you or I may do lawfully, which will not enſnare us, but more ſtrongly engage us to our duty, none will doubt this. In dealing with a man, you, or I, or any reaſonable man would be ready to give any ſecurity that we might give, without enſnaring of our ſelves. Now *Vows well compoſed do more enſure the duty, for we cannot go back, it is a Vow; yet do not enſnare,* for *we can perform them, they are Vows well compoſed. Jephthah's Vow bound him* faſt, *for it was the bond of a Vow*; but *this* bond *enſnared him*, for *it was raſh*, and *ill compoſed*; ſuch was *unlawful to him*, and is to us. *David's Vow* here was an *enſuring him to God*, and his duty, it *unalterably bound him*; *yet it was no ſnare* to him, for *he had* ſo *vowed*, that *he could* ſay, *I will pay my Vows*; ſuch *Vows* were *lawful to him*, ſuch are lawful to us. Now all well-compoſed Vows will be ſuch; they will very firmly bind us to our duty, and they will never enſnare us in their binding us; which thing will be more plainly ſeen, upon diſcovery of the next General, *viz.*

Judg. 11. 35.

3. General. When Vows are well compoſed, and ſo conſequently for the advantage of Religion?

1. In extraordinary caſes.

First then, If you would duly and well compoſe your Vows, *you muſt wait a fit ſeaſon, not vow on every occaſion.* Who is ready to vow on every occaſion, will break his Vow on every occaſion. It is a neceſſary Rule, That *we be as ſparing in making our Vows, as may be*; there being many great inconveniencies attending frequent and multiplied Vows. It is very obſervable, that the Scripture mentioneth very few examples of Vows, compared with the many inſtances of very great and wonderful Providences; *as if it would give us ſome inſtances that we might know what we have to do*, and *yet would give us but few that we might know we are not to do it often.* You read *Jacob*

lived

lived fevenſcore and ſeven years, *Gen.* 47. 28, but you read (I think) but of one Vow that he made: Our extraordinary exigences are not many, and I ſay our Vows ſhould not be more. Let this then be the firſt neceſſary ingredient of a well-ordered Vow, let it be no oftner made than the preſſing greatneſs of an evil to be removed, or the alluring excellency of a bleſſing extraordinary to be obtained, will well warrant. *Jephthah*'s Vow was ſo far right, he had juſt occaſion; there was a great and preſſing danger to be removed; there was an excellent bleſſing to be obtained; the danger was, leſt *Iſrael* ſhould be enſlaved; the bleſſing was victory over their enemies: This warranted his Vow, though his raſhneſs marred it. It was in *David*'s troubles that *David* ſware, and vowed a Vow to the moſt High, *Pſal.* 132. 1, 2. And *Jacob* forbare to vow, until his more than ordinary caſe bade him vow, and warranted him in ſo doing, *Gen.* 28. 20. Let us do as he did, ſpare to vow, until ſuch caſe puts us on it.

Secondly, When the extraordinary caſe warrants thee to this extraordinary obliging thy ſelf, then *be ſure to proceed deliberately, and with advice.* Conſider what thou doſt; every one condemns raſh Vows, and I am ſure inconſiderate Vows are raſh ones. Here *Jephthah* failed; he did not conſider and ponder with himſelf what he was about to do when he vowed: *Aquinas* reckons this among the three things neceſſary to a Vow. And ſince this was wanting in *Jephthah, the Scripture makes a narration of his fact, but no where giveth commendation to it.* This is one of the conditions *Bucan* preſcribes, *That we thoroughly weigh:* But we have a greater than *Aquinas*, or *the other two here; Be not raſh with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be haſty to utter any thing before God,* Eccleſ. 5. 2. Which rule he doth in the Context extend to this caſe of Vows, *Verſ.* 4. 5, 6. Be not haſty, but *deliberate* theſe *four* things in thy Vow:

2. It muſt be deliberate.

Ad votum tria de neceſſitate requiruntur; ſc. deliberatio, &c. 2a. 2æ. q. 88. art. 1. Scriptura hoc ejus factum narrat tantum ſed non laudat. Pet. Mart. loc. com. cl. 3. c. 6. Ut maturè deliberemus. loc. com. de votis.

First, *Whether that thou voweſt to do be lawful; ſin can never be the matter of a juſtifiable and well compoſed Vow.* If that thou voweſt be not lawful, it is not ſo much a Vow, as a contriving and deſigning of wickedneſs. *It was a murtherous conſpiracy* of thoſe *more than forty*, Act. 23. 21, *not a Vow*, to take away *Paul*'s life. Whatever God hath forbidden us in our ordinary courſe of life, as he hath forbidden every ſin, that cannot be the matter of an extraordinary promiſe unto God. The Schoolmen tell us it is to be *de meliore bono, in an excelling good:* now what is not lawful, is not good. They tell us, *Debet fieri Deo, de iis quæ Dei ſunt:* It *muſt be made to God, in the things that are of God*; and we are ſure no unlawful thing is of God.

1. Whether lawful.

Aquin. 2. 2. q. 88. ar. 1. c.

2. As *it muſt be conſidered, whether the thing be lawful; ſo next we are to conſider, whether it will be acceptable unto the Lord.* The Vow is made to him, and the performance of it is to him: It is a Debt, and payment is to be made to him. *If* it be *a matter which* thou findeſt *upon after-ſearch*, to be indeed *lawful, yet* in reaſon to be thought, *not acceptable for ſo great a mercy* as thou haſt received; *thou wilt be enforced to confeſs thy* miſtake and *error in vowing:* And this is to provoke God, *Eccl.* 5. 6, *Sit Deo acceptum*, is the ſecond circumſtance under deliberation: Which will be ſeen,

2. Whether acceptable to God.

3. By a third particular, *i.e. Whether that thing thou voweſt, bear a proportion to that thou didſt expect and pray for when thou vowedſt, or to that thou hadſt*

3. Whether proportioned.

hadst received, for which thou dost now make thy Vow. Bring it, with the providence which occasioned it, set them together, and hear what thy own reason, what other mens judgment, what the very things themselves, what thy receits and returns say of thy Vows, in the matter of them; as in ordinary, so in all extraordinary mercies, *God requires and accepteth only suitable and well proportioned returns:* If it be over-proportioned, it will hazard thee; if it be under-proportioned, it will shame thee, and neither will be so well accepted. Though one meals meat when thou art hungry, is more, and a greater mercy than thou canst equal by thy obedience; yet to vow thy self, and all that is thine for that one mercy, is more than is expected, and may be called a disproportioned Vow. So on the contrary, to pray for a prosperous voyage, and an ample return of thousands, and to vow thereupon a few pence or shillings, is disproportioned, will not be accepted: *Thou must render to the Lord according to thy receipts from the Lord.*

3. Whether in thy power.

Fourthly, In a well-composed Vow, thy deliberation must be imployed in considering thy power and ability; *Whether it be in thy power to do what thou vowest: No impossible thing can be the matter of a Vow.* God hath not made an impossibility the matter and primitive object of our duty, nor doth he expect we should; or would he accept such a Vow: for a Vow of an impossible thing is in effect to bind our selves to falsifie our Vow. *Who engageth to do what he cannot do, engageth himself to be worse than his word.* You must consider then whether the thing be possible in it self; and then next, whether it be in your power, that you can say you will do it, that you may truly affirm you can absolutely do it; which thing being very uncertain, for what is to day in our power, to morrow may be out of our power: It is therefore good to limit it so far, as it shall be in your power, and so long as it continues in your power to perform your Vows. These two things are requisite to a well-composed Vow; an occasion or exigency more than ordinary, and then a thing lawful, acceptable, proportioned to the mercy, and within our power. Now when these concur,

5. Vows must be cheerfully made.

A third must be added, that is, *Thou must vow cheerfully, and with a ready mind:* there must be much of the will in it. Some tell us the *Latin* word noting a Vow, comes from the word which signifies the will: Indeed *all* that is *in a Vow*, so far *as* it is *a Vow*, *is* and must be *of our will*, for it consisteth principally, if not solely, in the manner of our obliging our selves: and this is voluntary. God hath left it much at our liberty to vow, or not to vow; only he requires us to do it cheerfully, if we vow it is matter of our choice. *Deut.* 23. 22, *If thou forbear to vow, it shall not be sin unto thee.* Yet if we will Vow, it is matter of duty to do it cheerfully, for so *the Lord loveth a cheerful giver*, 2 Cor. 9. 7, and therefore expects a speedy performance. *Defer not to pay*, Eccl. 5. 3. Hence the Rabbinical Proverb, *Speed suits the time of deliverance.* As a Vow suits the time of dangers and straits; so haste from a ready mind, fits the time of deliverance and mercy. But,

בשעת רוחא שיטפא
Tempore respirationis festinatio.

4. Vow sincerely.

Fourthly, *He that will compose his Vow well, must vow sincerely and uprightly, that is, to the end he may most honour God.* By,

1. The *Commemoration of his mercy* and goodness. Vows are Mercies Monuments, on which are written the praise of the Lord.

2. The

2. The *publiſhing the mercies* of God, for the engaging others to admire the Lord, and to truſt him, and to ſeek unto him.

3. The *ſetting grace on work in the heart* and ſoul of him that Vows. It ſets grace on work, *both* in that part which eyes God to draw nearer, and to keep cloſer to him; *and* in that part which keeps eye on ſin to prevent, mortifie, and deſtroy it: So then *when a Chriſtian*, (having received, or being in expectation of ſome extraordinary mercy from God) *doth deliberately promiſe* what *is lawful in it ſelf, acceptable to God, proportioned to the mercy*, and, *within his power to perform*; *who* ſo *doth this chearfully*, and *ſincerely, that God may be honoured in the continued remembrance of it, in the publick declaring it*, and *in the exciting of grace, in the perſon Vowing: Then hath a Chriſtian well compoſed his Vow.* And ſuch a Vow doth very much further Religion: Which will appear by handling the next thing, *How much, or in what things it doth further and promote Religion?* Now there are three grand concerns of Religion, than which it hath none greater; and all three are carried on, and promoted by ſuch Vows as theſe. 4. *General.* How well compoſed Vows promote Religion.

Firſt, *Religion hath its concernment in the credit and reputation which it hath in the World:* Religion hath a name to look after, ſo well as you, or I; and it loſeth, or gaineth as it is either honoured, or reproached by the Profeſſors of it: Now when times of extraordinary danger drives us to our Prayers and Vows to the true God, and we reſolve to have mercy from him, or to chuſe to fall into his hand, this ſets the credit and honour of Religion, that it can have recourſe to God whom we know can deliver us. This is ſomewhat; but the making a Vow doth not ſo much honour Religion as the performing of it doth, when it is hereby declared to the World, that Religion is the thing makes men the ſame in their mercies, which they were in their diſtreſſes; that the God they worſhip is the true God, able to require their Vows if they ſhould neglect to pay them. A Heathen who in diſtreſs makes a Vow, and in his ſafety performs it carefully, putteth a very high honour upon his falſe God, upon his Idol. What Chriſtian ſoever makes and keeps his Vows duly, doth likewiſe put an honour on the true God. The credit of Religion.

It honours,

1. *The power and providence of God, by acknowledging its Soveraignty over all in the world, and its particular diſpoſing and over-ruling of us and our concerns.* When thou prayeſt and voweſt in a ſtrait, thou ſeemeſt to tell the World thou believeſt that thy God rules the World by his power and providence. But when thou payeſt thy Vows, thou really teſtifieſt to the World that thou believeſt and owneſt this power in thy particular caſe; ſo when *Jepthah*, when *David* paid their Vows, they did give real teſtimony that their God delivered them by his power and providence; and this is Religions honour, that it is the Worſhip of ſo mighty a God.

2. *It honours God in his readineſs to hear, and in his faithfulneſs to*

answer the prayers of his suppliants; Prayers conceived, speak a belief that he is ready; Vows made, speak our confidence that he is faithful; but now Vows performed, speak thus much, that we have found him so to us; when *David* said, *I will pay my Vows*, it is, that he may render to the Lord for the Lords readiness and faithfulness to hear and deliver him. Now its Religious honour, that it is the worship of a God of truth and faithfulness.

3. *It honours God in his Omniscience and all-seeing eye: it declares to the world that we worship and serve a God who takes notice of us in particular, and who observes whether we keep our word with him, or no*; when thou hast made a Vow, and canst perform it; yea, dost perform it, because thou knowest and believest thy God remembers when thou didst make it, and observest how thou wilt perform it, what is this but to give him the honour of his all-seeing and all-observing eye!

4. *It honours Religion, in that it is a Demonstration that Religion teacheth men gratitude.* It is a high charge which is laid on the *Romans* in their Heathenism, that they were unthankful, *Rom.* 1. 21. *It is a very great reproach to Religion, to have its professors branded with this*: It is (though but one single miscarriage) left on *Hezekiah*'s name, like a spot in the Moon, to endure while his name shall be in remembrance, *That he remembred not to return to the Lord, according to the benefit done unto him*, 2 Chron. 32. 25. But *now* thy *care to make* thy Vows well, *that they may be kept*, and thy *thankfulness in keeping them*, when so made, *do* clearly *evidence, that* thy *Religion engageth thee to aim* and *attempt at the highest gratitude.* Now according to the old Rule, if *you say a man is unthankful, you say he is all naught*; if you say he is thankful, and his Religion teacheth him to be so, you speak all good of the man and of his Religion. Indeed *David* doth often comprise all Religion in this, *Be thankful unto him.*

Si ingratum dixeris omnia dixis.

So *Religion shineth* forth in the lustre and brightness of a good name, *when* they *who profess it, dare neither be rash* in *making*, not *remiss* or false *in keeping their Vows.*

Next: Vows well composed, and faithfully performed, do much promote Religion, and that frequently.

Spreading Religion.

2. *By setting forward the growth of Religion, in the midst of those who profess it*, (for I will only speak of this now, albeit I might speak of the spreading of Religion amongst such, who before were strangers to it, by the faithfulness of some zealous, prudent, and industrious votaries). When Christians on great exigencies are brought on their knees to pray, and plead, and confess, and promise, if they may be heard; and when they come to praise, acknowledg and pay their Vows to God in the presence of those are called his people, it is very powerful to

By confirming.

1. *Confirm them in the profession, and to establish them*; For who would not hold fast where he can observe such goodness, tenderness, and power in God he worshippeth? Men, religious men, some at least will praise the

Psal. 107.

Lord

Lord for ſuch wonderful works to the children of men, when they ſee ſuch *excellent loving-kindneſs ſhewed to the diſtreſſed, the children of men will put their truſt in God.* None will leave the ſhadow of that wing which ſo ſaveth. Pſal. 36. 7.

2. *It is very like to make them enquire into the ways and doings which have been theirs, but have not been good,* and to look forward to the ways which muſt be theirs, and muſt be amended; when a ſtander-by ſhall obſerve the diſtreſs a good man is in, and how he reſents neglect of duty, prevalency of corruption, neceſſity of reforming, and binds himſelf to more diligent diſcharge of duty, to more vigorous oppoſition of ſin, to conſtant care of reforming; he is ready to reflect on himſelf; and if he be what he profeſſeth, will judg himſelf one who is as deep in the fault, as much needing to reform, and as near to the like or greater diſtreſs; he may ere long be put to it, and therefore it will be beſt to be on the amending hand. Reforming.

But however, thirdly, Vows well made, and kept well, very much improve and promote Religion in the heart and life of him who ſo voweth and keepeth his Vow; If none of thoſe who are acquainted with thy religious making and keeping thy Vows, ſhould either honour it more, or ſet to the exerciſe of it more, yet certainly it will produce ſuch effects in thy life, as will very much conduce to the encreaſe of godlineſs and righteouſneſs; which will appear by ſome few particulars, which are undeniably the effects of a well-compoſed Vow, and do as undeniably promote and ſet forward Religion: As 3. Vows promote Religion in the Votaries heart and life.

First, *A well compoſed Vow will make thee more circumſpect and wary in the general courſe of thy life.* Such an influence it hath, as doth more directly work on one particular part, yet is not terminated to that particular only. It is here as with a Debtor, who doubles his bond and ſecurity for his Debt, upon ſome extraordinary favour which his Creditor ſhewed him. This double bond directly looks to that particular Debt, but it works on the Debtor's ingenuity and gratitude, to be the more careful in the diſcharge of all his Debts; ſo thy Vows looks on a particular, but engageth thee to better diſcharge all of thy Debts to God. Thus it was with *David*, Pſal. 56. 12, 13, *Thy Vows are upon me, O God.* Now theſe Vows were made when he was in danger of his life, as it ſeemeth from the *13th Verſ.* For when God heard him, *he delivered his ſoul from death*; for this he vowed Praiſes in particular, and he will render them; but withall, he takes himſelf to be hereby engaged to a more exact and circumſpect walk before God in all duties; ſo he expreſſeth himſelf, *Verſ.* 13. latter part. *Vows are too broad and general, which are not fixed more eſpecially to ſome one thing.* And, *They are too narrow which are ſo fixed to one, that they exclude all other things which might conveniently be taken in.* *Jacob* mentions Tythes as the particular object of his Vow; but *Jacob* withal intended a more exact and circumſpect care over himſelf and Family in matters of Religion, as appeareth by thoſe paſſages, *Gen.* 35. 2, 3, *Jacob ſaid unto his houſhold, and to all that were with him,* 1. Vows encreaſe circumſpection.

put away the strange Gods that are among you. Here is the reforming of his houshold. And observe, this was *in consideration of Gods answering his prayers*, when he vowed unto God, who answered him in his distress, and *was with him in the way which he went.* So then like a stream it riseth from one spring-head, and runs into one main current, but it dispersеth it self through many other smaller branches, and waters every part. But,

2. Vows discover former defects.

Secondly, *Well composed Vows do very much promote Grace and Holiness in the heart of the Vower, in that it doth bring the man to a serious view and survey of his former defects and neglects*; when he comes to look over his streights, what likely brought them on him, and so put him on this extraordinary way of seeking God, and suing for mercy; when he reads over the bond he hath voluntarily entred into, and observes what put him thus in Debt to God; when he views these, and such like particulars, he comes to knowledg of his former aberrations and defects. Now as a good and careful tradesman accounts he is in a good forwardness to a thriving way when he hath found out what did hinder and endamage his trade, for removal of which he hath set himself in a hopeful and likely way; so when a Christian comes to cast up accounts, to make even, he finds an unconstant and starting heart hath in this or that particular endamaged him; and if there be any way of dealing with it to keep it constant and stable, it is by doubling its bonds, and this must be done by Vow; this course is like to repair former defects, and reparation. I am sure is a good and effectual means to keep up the house. Some Interpreters tell us, that when *Jacob* came to reform his house, it was occasioned by his defective observance of his Vow; and that God in *Gen.* 35. 1, puts him in mind of it in such words, *Go up to Bethel and dwell there, and there build an Altar*; if their conjecture fail not, it is a pertinent instance to our case; *Jacob* had made a good Vow, and well ordered, and doubtless had performed much of it; yet thirty years after, he is minded of it by God, and then he comes to consider and perform what was yet wanting, to make up his defects; *Thus when care to perform Vows well made, discovers things ill carried to the prejudice of Religion, it makes way for future furtherance of Religion.*

Dub. But it is like you will enquire, *May a Christian Vow the repairing of such defects?* are they not more than can be discerned? more than can be prevented? should he Vow this, would he not ensnare himself, and break his Vows?

Sol. To this I answer briefly, That *no man in the world may engage himself by Vow, to live for future without any defects*, such perfection is only in Heaven; here it is not attainable. But *a Christian may engage himself by Vow to be careful*, and to do his best diligence *to prevent as many as he can:* He may Vow that so far as Grace shall enable him, he wi l endeavour to live with fewer faults. But *a Vow of full perfection can never be a well composed Vow*, nor ever be performed.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Well compoſed Vows do promote Religion in the heart and life of a Chriſtian, in that *it ſtrongly and unalterably engageth the Chriſtian againſt ſome one or other particular ſin, which would more eaſily prevail, if the reverence or care of ſo ſacred an engagement did not ſet the Chriſtian againſt that ſin.* Sometime we ſhould ſin by taking too little notice of great providences, or by ſetting them at too low rates, or by ſoon forgetting them, or by waxing proud and inſolent under them. Now ſuch ſins provoke God, weaken Religions intereſt in the heart, and diminiſh its fruit in the life. Now when Vows prevent ſuch ſins, they do as much promote Religion as preventing Phyſick promotes the health of the body; of ſuch a nature was *Job*'s covenant with his eyes, which ſhut the windows of his ſoul, and kept out ſin by preventing its entrance at the out-doors, *I have made a covenant with my eyes*, Job 31. 1. Away then with all alluring beauties, I cannot gaze on them, for I cannot be falſe to my Vow and Covenant. Every Vow is for more ſtrict and exact approbation of our ſeves, in either univerſal or particular, either in a perpetual or temporary obſervance and ſerving the Lord: Now that promotes Religion, which thus exactly and ſtrictly binds the ſoul to approve it ſelf to God: Sin and Religion have two concernments as contrary to each other, as the Rebel, and the Law of his Soveraign; and as he promotes the intereſt of his Soveraign who doth ſtrictly bind himſelf to oppoſe any Rebel, ſo he promotes Religion, who by Vow binds himſelf ſtrictly to oppoſe any one ſin whatever. If *Noah* vowed after his miſcarriage, againſt drinking any conſiderable quantity of wine that he might prevent that ſin, this Vow ſtrengthened the intereſt of his holy ſobriety, and the intereſt of Religion too, ſo far as ſobriety promotes our fitneſs and greater aptneſs to Religious works.

3. Vows engage againſt a particular ſin.

But I ſhall be here asked, *May a man Vow againſt any one particular ſin, and bind himſelf by ſo great a bond againſt the committing of it?* The ground of the doubt is becauſe none ſo ſtands but he may fall, and it is not in our power to keep our ſelves from any ſin. *Dub.*

To this then I anſwer, That *it would be raſh and inconſiderate to Vow abſolutely and peremptorily, that thou wilt never act ſuch or ſuch a ſin.* But thus thou muſt juſtifiably Vow. *Sol.*

1. *That thou wilt endeavour, and with thy beſt diligence labour to prevent this or that ſin*; thou mayeſt Vow to ſet a guard upon thy ſoul, but thou mayſt not Vow the ſucceſs of this guard; the *endeavour* is thy *duty*, and *that thou mayeſt Vow*; the *ſucceſs* is *Gods gift, and that thou mayſt pray for.* And let weak Chriſtians take notice of this, leſt they enſnare themſelves by vowing what is not in their power.

2. *If thou wilt Vow ſo, thou muſt do it ſtill with dependance on the Lord for power to perform:* through grace thou wilt not ſin thus or thus, may be thy Vow.

3. If

3. If thou wilt ſo vow, then take my advice with thee, (1) Let it be only againſt great ſins, and ſuch as are committed with deliberation, theſe are ſeen before committed, and ſo are more eaſily reſiſted. (2) Let it reach no farther than ſincere endeavour againſt them: And (3) be ſure to do your utmoſt, and then though the ſin may be too ſtrong for you, yet are you not falſe to your Vow. But next,

4. Vows encreaſe our care of particular duty.

Fourthly, *Well compoſed Vows* do much *promote Religion* in the heart and life of a Chriſtian, *inſomuch as they engage the Chriſtian to a more intent care of ſome particular duty, and Grace to be more than ordinarily attended and exerciſed:* A Vow binds the Votary to a more than ordinary care of duty, and to a more than ordinary diligence in the exerciſe of Grace; now where ſuch a Vow is ſo well compoſed that the duty may be more than ordinarily well performed, and the Grace may be (more than uſually hath been) exerciſed, there ſuch a Vow doth as much promote Religion, as its care doth exceed our ordinary care: Who beſtows moſt on a duty, or on the conſtant exerciſe of a grace, doth do moſt to the promoting of Religion; and I am ſure, who ſo doth adviſedly and duly vow, and doth punctually and duly perform his vow, is the man whoſe care is greateſt in that duty and grace which his vow and the particular occaſion of it did commend to his thoughts.

Dub. But *may we vow to perform a duty, or exerciſe a grace?* Can we ſay 'tis in our power?

Sol. To this in one word; *Vow ſo far as it is and ſhall* be *in your power, and you may warrantably and acceptably do it before God*; the performance of duty, and exerciſe of grace, are debts we owe to God, and we may bind our ſelves doubly to pay them ſo far as our ſtock will reach; and without this limitation every vow is raſh and ill compoſed.

5. Vows, &c. by obſerving and improving Providences.

Fifthly, *Well compoſed Vows* do much *promote Religion, in that they engage us to a more diligent obſerving of Providences, and to a due improving them to the beſt advantage of grace*: When thou haſt vowed, thou haſt ſealed on thy part; if God do anſwer thy hope by his providence, he performs the condition on his part, and now it muſt be thy care to obſerve Gods providence, and to improve it; ſo *Jacob* vowed, then obſerveth how God will perform with him, and afterwards makes the improvement: Now providence anſwering the expectation of one who voweth, hath in it,

1. *Remarkable power and faithfulneſs to be the ground of faith*; this was ſeen in that Providence which gave *Jephtha* that victory which was his hope and expectation when he vowed.

2. *Eminent goodneſs and tenderneſs to be the loadſtone and attractive of love*; ſo in that Providence which brought *David* to the poſſeſſion of his hopes: and *David* thought ſo when he profeſſed, he would love God dearly, becauſe he had delivered him out of the hand of all enemies. Pſal. 18. 1.

3. *Eminent readineſs to hear prayer*; when God doth as to *Jephtha* ſpeedily hear; or as to *Jacob*, continue ſtill to hear for many years together.

4. *More than ordinary obliging conſiderations to draw forth our obedience too*; ſuch Providences have tongues to call for our Faith, our love, our prayers,

prayers, our obedience and our praiſes: What ſhall I render to the Lord? is the ſerious well adviſed Votaries enquiry.

5. *A moſt undoubted evidence appropriating this to the Lord*; that the expecting Chriſtian can truly ſay, it was the Lord's doing, and his only, none bore part in the work, none ſhall bear away ſhare of his truſt, love, prayer or obſervant obedience due to him from me.

Now if theſe particulars be conſidered, it cannot ſure be doubted longer, whether well compoſed vows do promote Religion, when they do ſo engage and quicken thoſe who vow to ſuch Acts of Duty, to ſuch exerciſe of Grace, to ſuch oppoſition of ſin, to ſuch improvement of providence, for the encreaſe of Grace: And what is Religion but all theſe in one word? and what is the promoting of Religion, but the facilitating, continuing, and perfecting of all theſe, which is not a little furthered by ſuch Vows?

It yet remains to ſhew, *Whence theſe well compoſed Vows have ſuch influence on Religion? what have they in them more than ordinary thus to promote it?* To this I will anſwer as briefly as I may; There is in ſuch Vows a moſt notable awakening and quickening power, which ſets all a mans care, wiſdom, truth, and ſtrength on work, to do the things whereby Religion is ſo much promoted. 5. *General.*

1. *A deep rooted natural reverence and awe of a ſerious Vow*, which makes the man who hath ſo much ſenſe of Religion as to make a Vow, to have as much care of performing it: Man is readier to caſt off the reverence he owes to Gods Law, than to caſt off the regard he hath to his own Vow: ſo that many times it is very expedient to engage by Vow to do what is our duty by the Law of God: The bond of natural Conſcience is very ſtrong, and Vows have much of their ſtrength from it, and thereby become great ſupporters of Religion.

2. *To this the Chriſtian hath a ſuperadded ſtrict command and preſcript of the Law of God, indiſpenſably requiring the performance of that Vow which is lawful and poſſible*; *I have opened my mouth, and I cannot go back*, Judg. 11. 35. It is the unalterable Law, if you vow, you muſt pay, *Pſal.* 76. 12. God did indulg the *Jews* ſo far as to redeem ſome of their Vows, but he allowed none to break them. Read that, *Deut.* 23. 21. *When thou ſhalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou ſhalt not ſlack to pay it, for the Lord thy God will ſurely require it of thee.* And *ver.* 23, *That which is gone out of thy lips, thou ſhalt keep and perform.* Now when ſo much of Religion lieth in and dependeth on ſuch Vows, and theſe Vows are ſuch inviolable ties that God will wink at none who break them, they cannot but have ſuch influence and ſtrong operation on perſons to the advantage of Religion.

3. *Gods ſevere judgments on contemners of their Vows, add much to their influence*: I will not mention examples of vengeance on Heathens for breach of their Vows, though the Idol deſerved not better; yet God who is the true God, would have men know ſuch ſacred bonds as Vows ſhould not be profaned by ſleight performing, or contemned by a total neglect of them. The *Jewiſh* Rabbies tell us, that God puniſhed *Jacob* for neglecting his Vow, by *Dinah*'s miſcarriage. However, it is enough God hath threatned the falſifier of his Vows with no leſs than a deſtruction of the works of his hands, if not with the ruin of his perſon: God will not let ſuch an one go unpuniſhed, *leſt his*

holy

Ne ſacrum ejus nomen ludibrio exponeretur neve populus aſſueſcere ad implim ejus contemptum ſi fraudator impune, negaret quod Deo promiſerat. Bucanus *loc. com.* 45 *de Vot.*

holy Name ſhould be ſcorned, leſt the people ſhould be accuſtomed to an impious contempt of him, if the falſifier of his Vow ſhould deny what he promiſed to God, and go unpuniſhed. In one word, that which ſtands thus on the unchangeable Law of Nature, and is written on the Conſcience; what is confirmed and ratified by the peremptory poſitive Law of God, what is yet further armed with the terrible threat of the God of Heaven, muſt needs have a mighty binding ſtrength in it obliging men: But now all theſe concur in Vows well compoſed, and hence they have ſuch influence on Religious perſons. You may add the

4*th*, viz. *The gracious acceptance that God gives to perſons ſo vowing and performing their Vows.* With

5ly, *The ſignal Bleſſings crowning Religious perſons in due performance of their Vows*; All which make them careful to vow ſo, that they may ſay they will pay their Vows, and in paying them, render to the Lord for all his benefits.

6 *Gener.* viz. *Uſe.*

I am come now to the laſt thing I intended, the practical application of this Practical Caſe: And here Reader I ſhall be briefer than I firſt purpoſed, becauſe I was enforced by the undiſcerned ſpeed of the time out-running me in preaching it, to contract much more than I was willing to have done.

1. *Uſe Informs.*

The firſt *Uſe* then, If well compoſed Vows do indeed much promote Religion, it *will teach us how careful we ſhould be in making our Vows to the greateſt advantage of Religion.* If you look to the neceſſary requiſites of ſuch Vows, it will appear to you that you need a great care and diligence in making them; if you look to Religions loſs in the breach of Vows, or its gain in a faithful performance of them, the care will appear double; if you look to your obligation under which you are to perform them, it will appear yet further needful, that you be very wary and circumſpectly careful how you make them; the raſh and inconſiderate perſon who cares not how he makes, will not care whether he perform his Vows. And what a reproach is this to his Religion? what a provocation is this to his God, to deſtroy either him, or the works of his hand? And all theſe beſpeak your care, and adviſe you to circumſpection in this caſe. Do you not find it hard enough to diſcern what is daily and ordinarily to be done under daily and ordinary occurences? are you not in great care to frame your ſelves fitly and comely to every days buſineſs you have to do among men, eſpecially when you come within the tye of a promiſe to them? How ſollicitous are you, what, and when, and on what terms you promiſe? How you ſhall perform, and ſo keep your word and credit? Any competent meaſure of honeſty, and regard to reputation, will make a man conſider what he promiſeth to a man; how much more care ſhould he uſe in promiſing unto God, where the promiſe is more than ordinary, where the tye is ſo indiſſoluble, where the demand is ſo punctually and peremptorily made, where the danger ſo great in making default? Let me commend unto thy more than ordinary care, theſe two things, if thou wilt make a Vow ſo well framed as to ſet up Religion.

Firſt, *Be careful that thy Vow of obedience for*, and *in conſideration of a mercy hoped or received, hold weight with that mercy*; keep a ſteddy hand, and get an even balance and *weigh the mercy* which commands thy obedience, and

weigh

weigh thy Vow which promiſeth it. It will be thy reproach, and Religions reproach to have thy Vow found a *ſhekel*, when thy mercy weighs a *talent*; when God gives a full harveſt, thou muſt not Vow a handful or one ſheaf. This were to expoſe thy God to contempt; and it would be a practical denial of his bounty to thee. *Jacob* obſerved this proportion, *Gen.*28. 20, 21, 22, *God ſhall be his God*, and then *the tenth of all he hath ſhall be his.* Davids, *for all his benefits*, is as much as *according to all his benefits*, and that ſpeaks proportion and commenſurateneſs. Take care to this, for others will obſerve and enquire into it. They will weigh theſe two, thy mercy, and thy gratitude; do thou do it firſt, leſt thou be aſhamed, leſt God be provoked, and thou be puniſhed: for as good a man, and as great as thou who ere thou art, who readeſt this, met with all theſe, with ſhame, with the anger of his God, and with a puniſhment too on him for want of this. See *Hezekiah*'s fault and puniſhment, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. Don't fall ſhort of * Heathens, who knew this and obſerved it as their rule, and have branded ſuch who deviate from it: be careful thou put not off a mercy that lives many years with thee, with a days entertainment, or weeks, or months lodging with thee.

ככר *Talentum Hebræorum continet pondere* 3000 *ſiclos.* Brerewood *de ponderibus, Heb.*

* Φαστιλλῶ θύμα. *Sordidum & tenuem ſumptum hoc adagio ſignificabant.* Eraſm. *Adagior. chil.* 2. *cent.*7. *Ad.*35.

Secondly, *Be careful that thou make thy Vows ſo, that they may be thy witneſſes whom God makes:* be careful thou make them witneſſes of thy performing, whom God made witneſſes of thy ſtreits, and thou madeſt witneſſes of thy Vows. A man that would have his credit in his truth to his word kept up, would chuſe them witneſſes of his performing, who were witneſſes of his promiſe; I think *David* took this heed in his rendring and paying his Vows, *I will do it* (ſaith he) *now in the preſence of his people*, Verſ. 14. The people were witneſſes to his ſtreights, Prayers and Vows, and he will honour Religion by performing in their ſight what he ſealed, ſigned and delivered, what he vowed to the Lord. *Seek not more than providence makes conſcious to thy Vows, leſt this be interpreted oſtentation*, and vain ſelf-glorying: *take ſo many, leſt the good example be loſt, or thou ſuſpected of falſifying thy Vow.* Briefly and plainly, doſt thou on a ſick bed make thy Vow before thy Family? before the Neighbourhood! be careful to perform it before them, let them ſee thou art what thou vowedſt to be. This care in thy Vow will be a means to make it moſt to the advantage of Religion, whilſt all that heard or knew thy Vow, bear thee teſtimony that thou art thankful; and more thou ſeekeſt not, leſt thou be ſuſpected to be proud; thus Religious gratitude and humility are ſet forth; thus thou giveſt others occaſion to glorifie thy Father who is in Heaven.

Uſe 2. Do well adviſed and compoſed Vows ſo much promote Religion, when well and faithfully kept? are they alſo ſuch ſacred and inviolable bonds? *Then look what Vows you are under, look how you have performed them.* It is time to view what you fairly promiſed for advancing of Religion, and what you have faithfully performed for its real advantage. Chriſtian, conſider with thy ſelf, waſt thou ever in more than ordinary diſtreſs? didſt thou not then Vow largely? tell me what were thy Vows? how haſt thou paid them? waſt thou ever in a poor, needy condition? didſt thou not then Vow to honour God with thy increaſe, to enrich the poor, to relieve thine indigent brethren, and Gods poor Children? Now what haſt thou done? who are

clothed out of thy flock? who are fed at thy table? who are lodged at thy charge? where's thy paying thy Vow? was it ever thy lot to be toſſed at Sea? to be mounted up to the Heavens? to be caſt down again into the depths? to be at thy wits end? Didſt thou not then Vow, if ever God ſhould command, and make it a calm, and bring thee to thy deſired Haven, thou wouldſt be more circumſpect in all manner of converſation, more vigilant to thy particular duty? more ſevere againſt thy particular ſin? Didſt thou not Vow that an Anniverſary Sermon, with an allowance to the Poor, or a conſtant Lecture, or an Almes-houſe, or ſome ſuch great ſtanding Monument, ſhould commemorate Gods goodneſs to thee, and perſwade others to truſt and ſeek unto that goodneſs? or at leaſt if thy Eſtate would not do ſo much, haſt thou not Vowed to do according to thy power? where now is thy paying theſe Vows? But I was never poor, never at Sea: may be ſo, yet art thou not under ſome Vows for ſome other mercies? waſt thou never in danger of loſing thy Eſtate, thy Relations, thy Life? Didſt thou never lie dangerouſly and (men thought) deſperately ſick? haſt thou no ſick-bed Vows upon thee? ſtay here whoever thou art that readeſt theſe lines, and read not a word more, until thou haſt duly conſidered whether ever thou haſt been dangerouſly ſick? and what thou then Vowedſt? and how thou haſt performed?

The proud contemner of Religion learns by his dangerous ſickneſs to promiſe to be religious, waſt thou ever ſuch? didſt thou ever ſo Vow? and art thou now what thou didſt then promiſe? The prophane ſwearer and blaſphemer is brought by a ſickneſs to fear his Oath, and to Vow to learn to fear and abſtain. Oh then, if God will not deſtroy and damn, but give life, he will, that he will repent and amend; he will bleſs, but not blaſpheme his Name; he will never more prophanely ſwear and curſe; waſt thou ever ſuch a one? ſo ſinful? ſo engaged? what performance now? The Drunkard vows ſobriety when he is ſick; the Adulterer vows chaſtity; the worldling vows to mind Heaven; the Tradeſman who hath ſo often ſold his Conſcience at every price to gain ſix pence, by an untruth and lye, then if this plunge be out-lived, vvill keep a good Conſcience. In a vvord, *A ſick-bed makes a ſinner ſick of his ſin, and ſeldom fails to make him Vow againſt it.* Novv Reader vvhat thinkeſt thou? Vovvs or no Vovvs? art thou under any or no? I am perſvvaded novv thou canſt not deny it; methinks I could believe I heard thee ſay, ſuch a Fever, ſuch an Ague, the ſmall Pox, a Surfeit, the Peſtilence, or ſome ſuch diſeaſe, made me Vow to be another man, to deſtroy ſin, to exerciſe grace, to love God, to hate luſt, to be holy and heavenly. Now thou ſeeſt thy bond, where is thy payment of thy debt? Oh how few do well keep any! how much fewer do well keep their ſick-bed Vows, as if theſe Vows were as ſickly as their makers, and doomed to as ſhort a life as the ſick Votary thought he had been doomed to. Reader, thy Conſcience tells thee what thou canſt anſwer, or what thou muſt confeſs in this matter, and upon thy Conſciences anſwer I have advice for thee if thou art conſcious,

1. *Of total neglect, go ſpeedily on thy knees, bleſs infinite patience, humble thy ſelf before infinite grace, get out thy pardon*; and whilſt God ſaith by me, by theſe lines, defer not to pay, be thou honeſt to thy word, thankful to thy God,

God, advantageous to Religion, and an example of reformation, leſt next ſickneſs be thy death, and thy Vows be thy ſin, which ſhut out thy hopes of praying and ſpeeding: God delights not to anſwer ſuch fools; thou maiſt find Motives enough to haſten thee to this duty, from *Eccl.* 5. 2, 4, 5, 6, which I commend to thy thoughts with theſe Queries.

1. *Is not God in Heaven and thou on earth?*
2. And, *Is not thy Vow made to this great God?*
3. And, *Is not this Vow thy voluntary debt?* And
4. *Doth God require preſent payment?* Or indeed
5. *Wilt thou worſe thy condition by Vowing?* Or
6. *Wilt thou provoke Gods anger and diſpleaſure?*
7. *Dar'ſt thou venture on threatned deſtruction?*

Theſe are *Solomon*'s Motives to a punctual and preſent payment of Vows; I offer them to awake thee from neglect of thy Vovvs.

Or, Secondly, *Haſt thou vowed, and performed in part, but not fully?* haſt thou done ſomewhat, but not all of that thou haſt promiſed, and vowed? I adviſe,

1. *See what hindred: waſt thou raſh in promiſing more than thou could'ſt do?* is this the reaſon thou didſt not all, becauſe ſome of it was out of thy power? thou muſt be humbled for thy raſh Vow; and if ever it comes within thy power, do it.

2. *See whether thy ſloth and negligence did not hinder, when thou mighteſt have performed,* but now it is out of thy power, and thou canſt not: this is a high breach of thy Vows, and I know no way for thee, but due and ſeaſonable repentance, and confeſſing, that God may pardon thee; and be thou better in what thou canſt, ſince thou canſt not be ſo good in this as thou ſhouldeſt.

3. *See whether it continue yet in thy power to do, though as yet thou haſt not done it*; and if ſo, be affected with the ſight of thy unthankfulneſs, but remove this ſin by performing thy Vows, for God will not releaſe the promiſe, nor cancel the bond, until the debt be paid by him who hath power in his hand, and may do it.

But, *What if it were in my power when I vowed, but ſince that time Providence hath put it out of my power?* I was rich, when I vowed to relieve the poor; but when I was recovered, God ſuffered me to be ſpoiled as *Job* was, what ſhall I do then? *Dub.*

1. *Thy Vow well compoſed, engaged thee, ſo far as it was in thy power.* Remember, a well-adviſed Vow hath this expreſs condition, or this implied, ſo far, and ſo long as it is in my power to do, until I have done all. The tenth of all I have, of all that God ſhall give me, ſaith *Jacob*, I vvill give to God. Novv if the Lord exerciſe his bounty to *Jacob*, *Jacob* is engaged, then he hath povver, and can do it: if God make *Jacob* poor, the limitation his Vovv implied in it, doth quit him. *Sol.* 1.

Secondly, *So far as God puts it out of thy power, ſo far he releaſeth thee from the debt.* When God by his Providence over-ruling all, doth diſable thee to *Sol.* 2.

the payment, then he diſchargeth thee from the bond, this is Gods real diſcharge, and cancelling of the Obligation.

Are well compoſed Vows ſuch promoters of Religion? and are they to be made ſo warily? and do they bind ſo ſtrictly? *Then be ſure to wait until God give you juſt and fit ſeaſons for Vowing*: be not over haſty to Vow: it is an inconſiderate and fooliſh haſte of Chriſtians, to make more occaſions of Vowing, than God doth make for them; *Make* your Vows, *and ſpare not, ſo often as God bids you, but do not do it oftner*; you would wonder I ſhould diſſwade from Vowing often, when you have ſuch conſtant mercies; and wonder well you might, if God did expect your extraordinary bond and ſecurity for every ordinary mercy; but he requires it not, he is content with ordinary ſecurity of gratitude for ordinary mercies: when he calls for extraordinary ſecurity and acknowledgment, by giving extraordinary mercies, then give it, and do it,

1. *Chearfully, enter ſuch bonds willingly.*
2. *Pay the bond punctually at its time.*
3. *Pay it fully, in the whole of it; ſo do it, that you may ſay, I will chearfully*, and of choice; ſo do it, that you may call it a *paying punctually and fully*. And this will be accounted a rendring to the Lord, and a real promoting of Religion, by ſetting forth our debt, and the Lords goodneſs, to which we are indebted; Fear not to give thy God double ſecurity when he requires it. Fail not to pay readily and fully, when pay day comes, for the Lord doth expect and command thee ſo to do; and if thou do willfully make default, he will lay folly to thy charge, and take the forfeiture of thy bond, and make thee know it too, ſome way or other, to thy grief and trouble; keep out ſo long, or get out of ſuch debts ſo ſoon as thou canſt. Pay the Lord thy Vows.

How

How are we Compleat in Christ?

Col. III. last clause of vers. 11.

But Christ is all, and in all.

THE great concernment of lost Creatures, is above all things to mind salvation: this is the *one thing needful:* this should be the great *enquiry*, and in the neglect of this, all our other endeavours are no better than laborious trifles. The great danger which even they are in, who seriously mind salvation, is, lest they build upon some sandy foundation, seeking Heaven in those ways which lead not thither. The great design of Satan is, either to detain poor undone Creatures in a total neglect of salvation, or to deceive them in the way and means thereof: 'tis therefore the great care of the Apostle, as in other Scriptures, so in this, not only to undeceive the world, as to those mistakes which prevailed then, but to point out the right, the proper, the only sure way of salvation, *viz.* through Christ, whom he here declares to be so compleat a Saviour, that as we have *none other*, so we need none other, because *Christ is all*. Luk. 10. 42. Act. 16. 30. Act. 4. 12.

In the former part of the verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things on this side Christ, to commend us unto God, or stand us in stead in the matter of salvation; and this he does by removing four mistakes (at that time) common.

1. The mistake of the *Jews*, who prided themselves in a genealogical kind of sanctity, as being the seed of *Abraham*; this they account so great a matter, that they cannot be perswaded it could go otherwise than well with them: let the Messengers of God tell them their sins, warn them of their dangers, yet they shelter themselves under this priviledg, as that which would be a sufficient bulwark against all kind of threats and comminations: and though *John* the *Baptist* in his time, our Saviour in his time, and the Apostles in theirs, do all concur in taking them off from leaning upon this broken reed; yet will they not be beaten out of these strong holds. Time was indeed when salvation was of the *Jews*; but that wall of partition being now taken down, and the pale of the Church so far enlarged, as to take in both *Jew* and *Gentile*, Act. 10. 34, no National priviledg can now commend us unto God; nor can a succession of *Abraham*, according to the flesh, avail us, unless we succeed him in his faith. Mat. 3. 9. Joh. 8. 39, 44.

2. The

Gen. 17. 14. Rom. 2. 29. *Circumcisio erat in Judaica Religione ritus præcipuus adhibetur itaque ad designandam observationem omnium rituum Legalium.* 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. Act. 10. 34. 1 Sam. 16. 7. Heb. 12. 2. ἐν πᾶσιν ἢ πράγμασιν ἢ τοῖς τῆς ζωῆς ἡμῶν συνεκτικοῖς ἢ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν. Oec. in loc. *In omnibus i. e. fidelibus hunc in modum sanctificatis, & Christo copulatis.* Dav. *in* loc. *Quod lex bona est nostrum non est, quod autem male vivimus, nostrum est, & nihil utiq; prodest quod lex est bona, si vita & conversatio nostra non est bona. Lex enim bona muneris est Christi, vita autem non bona criminis nostri, imo hoc magis culpabiles sumus, si legem bonam colimus & mali cultores sumus. Quin potius non cultores si mali quia cultor,* &c Salv. *de Guber. Dei. l.* 4.

2. The mistake of the Circumcised, whether *Jews* or Proselytes; who, because they had this badg of Religion upon them, concluded themselves in a priority for Heaven, before all the world besides. But however, time was when Circumcision was an Ordinance of that necessity, that the Lord threatens to punish the neglect thereof, by cutting off that soul from among his people: yet was it not the outward but spiritual part, God accounted of. The Apostle in excluding this, excludes all outward religious Observations, as *Davenant* in *loc.*

3. The mistake of the *Grecians*, who were at that time the Masters of all Learning; and all other Nations in contradistinction unto them, were stiled *Barbarians*; and of all *Barbarians*, the *Scythians* were esteemed the rudest. But whatever worth and excellency may be in humane accomplishments, yet all these, in the business of salvation, are but poor matters. 'Tis neither the having nor wanting of these, that can considerably advantage or prejudice us in that high concernment.

4. The common mistake of the world; who from their rank and quality in the world, are ready to promise themselves a more easie acceptance with God. But *God is no respecter of persons:* He looks upon the children of men with *another kind of eye*, than man is used to do. Whether our outward condition be high or mean, there's nothing of privileg or disadvantage from hence, in respect of salvation.

And as in the former clause of the Verse, the Apostle shews the insufficiency of all things besides Christ; so in this clause he shews the single sufficiency of Christ alone. Whatever the *Jews* promised themselves from their stock and lineage; the Proselytes from their Circumcision; the *Grecians* from their wisdom and learning; the great ones of the world from their outward preheminencies, all that, yea, and much more, is Christ to Believers. *Christ is All.*

This single sufficiency of Christ, the Apostle proves by a double Argument.

1. The compleatness and perfection of Christ as a Saviour, *He is All.* Take salvation from first to last, in all the several parts of it, he is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginner and peefecter, the Author and finisher of all.

2. The way and means whereby Christ imparts and communicates this salvation, it is by being in all. Some read the words as an amplification of the fulness and compleatness of Christ, *Christ is All*, and that in *all things* that concern either our present comfort, or eternal happiness. Others refer these words *In all*, to those divers sorts of persons spoke of in the former part of this Verse; to whom, that Christ may be a Saviour, he disdains not to take up his dwelling in their souls, though lying under all the disadvantages which were then accounted prejudicial. And thus the Apostle seems to explain himself, *Gal.* 3. 28, a parallel-Scripture unto this. And according to this Exposition, as the benefit of Christs sufficiency is extended to all Believers by virtue of their Union unto him, so is it restrained and locked up from all unbelievers.

The Case to be insisted on from this Scripture is, How Christians are compleat in Christ? For the resolving hereof, take this natural deduction from the words:

Doct.

Doct. *That Christ is a Christians All.* By Christian I mean not them who have nothing more to declare them such, than only their Baptism, and outward professions, as the Church of *Sardis*, Rev. 3. 1. We account them Monsters in nature, who have the faces of men, but in their other limbs, the lineaments and proportions of brute beasts; and how can we account them better than Monsters in Christianity, who have the faces of Christians indeed, but withal the hearts and lives of Pagans. That *All* which is in Christ, is nothing unto such, except to encrease their guilt, and heighten their condemnation. But by the *Christian*, I mean him who is ἀληθῶς ἰσραηλίτης, *an Israelite indeed*, as Christ speaks concerning *Nathanael*, Joh. 1. 48. One who labours more to be, than seem religious; one whose great care is, that his heart may keep an even pace with his tongue, in all his outward professions; now to such Christ is *All*. In having an interest in him, they have enough for the supply of all wants; for the prevention of all dangers; for the procuring all good: And therefore what the Apostle speaks here in one word, *Christ is All*, he speaks at large, in an enumeration of several weighty particulars, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30, *Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* We are foolish *creatures*, *Christ is Wisdom*: We are guilty, He is *Righteousness*: We are polluted, He is *Sanctification*: We are lost and undone, but in him is *Redemption*: We are empty of all good, but He is a full fountain, from whom flow all those blessings which concern either our present comfort, or future happiness: We are necessitous and indigent; *in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledg*, Col. 2. 3. Ἐν ᾧ, in him *dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are compleat in him*, Col. 2. 9, 10. Or as you have it, *Col.* 1. 19, *In him dwells all fulness.* πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα. The rich Merchant thought himself no loser by the bargain, in parting with all he had to purchase an interest in Christ, *Mat.* 13. 45, 46. But when never so much is said, there cannot a greater word be used than what the Apostle speaks here, *Christ is All.* The *Greeks* were wont of old to account it an excellency to speak much in few words; to give their Auditors πέλαγος πραγμάτων ἐν σταλάγμασι ῥημάτων, an Ocean of matter in a drop of words. Thus does the Apostle here give us (as I may speak) gold in the wedg; which I shall endeavour to beat out into the leaf, by shewing how much is comprized in this one word *All.* The two names by which the most ancient Philosophers were wont to speak of God, were, that he was, τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ πᾶν, the true being, and the universal good; all the scattered excellencies which are dispersed among several ranks of Creatures, meeting in him, as the lines of the Circumference in the Center; This does the Apostle speak here of Christ, *He is All.* Physicians speak of an universal Medicine suited to all diseases, and helpful in all maladies: but whether this can be found in nature or not; yet certainly Christ is a *Panacea*, in him we have a plaister for all sores, a remedy against all distempers. There are indeed thousands of cases wherein all other helps are but *miserable comforters*, and *Physicians of no value*: but not one case wherein Christ is not a full and proper help. When all that friends can do, is to pity us, he can help us; because *Christ is All.*

For

For the further explaining and confirming of this great truth, three things shall be spoken to,
1. Wherein Christ is All.
2. How Christ is All.
3. What advantage it is to sincere Christians, to have their All in Christ.

1. Wherein Christ is All. In general, He is All in All things; for so some of no small account render the following words, and *in all*, as hath already been hinted. But more particularly,

1. Christ is All to sincere Christians, to free them from whatever might hinder their salvation. *Salvation* is not a meer negative thing, nor does it consist in a bare exemption from hell and wrath, but a translation into Heaven and Glory; but alas! betwixt us and Glory, there is μέγα χάσμα, a great Gulph, many bars and impediments; aye, but Christ is All to deliver us from these; and though our deliverance in this world is not compleat or perfect, yet is it so far compleat as to render our salvation undoubtful, if we be in the number of them to whom Christ is here said to be All.

1. The wrath of an offended God, which, like that flaming sword that kept our Apostate Parents from returning into Paradise (out of which, because of their Apostacy they had been ejected) would render our admission into Heaven equally impossible; but Christ, by bearing the wrath of God in his own person, hath taken it off from ours; and therefore he is said to *deliver us from the wrath to come*, 1 *Thess.* 1. 10. He who was the Son of Gods love, became the subject of his displeasure, as appears by comparing *Matth.* 3. 17, with *Isa.* 53. 10, that we who were children of wrath, might become the objects of his favour; and however Christ hath not delivered Believers from the anger of God as a Father, yet from the anger of God as a Judg. There is an anger that proceeds from love, as the anger of a Parent towards that Child whose good he desires; and there is a vindictive anger: the former Believers are neither freed from, nor would it indeed be their priviledg; there is not a greater judgment can befall poor sinful creatures here on earth, than for God not to discover himself angry with them for their sins, *Isa.* 1. 5. God then deals with men as a skilful Physician with an unruly Patient, whom he gives up as desperate; or as a tender Parent with a graceless child, whom he utterly rejects. In a word, whatever kind of anger might tend to the prejudice of Believers, that they are delivered from; but what is for their advantage, that they are subject to. That Christ is All in delivering from the wrath of God, may further be evidenced by these Considerations:

Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8, &c.

Magna ira est quando peccantibus non irascitur Deus. Hieron.

1. The adequate of Gods wrath is sin; there is this difference 'twixt wrath and mercy in God; that mercy flows (as I may so speak) naturally from God, and hath no other motive but only the gracious and merciful disposition of God; but wrath hath always its rise from us; and nothing in us but sin can draw down his wrath

wrath upon us. Our meanneſs cannot, our afflictions cannot; theſe may ſometimes be the effects of Gods wrath, but never the cauſes. No, 'tis *becauſe of theſe things that the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience*, Eph. 5. 6: *becauſe of theſe things*, i. e. becauſe of theſe ſins, as appears from the Verſes foregoing. What is it that hath filled every age and place of the World with ſo many dreadful tokens of Gods diſpleaſure, but only ſin? What was it that caſt the Angels out of Heaven, and degraded them from their firſt ſtation, but only ſin? What was it that drove our firſt Parents out of Paradiſe, and ſubjected them and all their Poſterity to ſo many Miſeries, but only ſin? What was it that brought deſtruction upon the old World, upon *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, *Zeboim*? What was it that broke off the natural branches, and hath for ſo many hundreds of years continued them under a divorce from God, but only ſin? In a word, look over all thoſe miſeries under which the whole Creation groans, *Rom.* 8. 22, and though thoſe Miſeries in ſeveral creatures are divers, yet do they all proceed from the ſame fountain, *viz.* Sin.

2. Chriſt is All in making expiation for ſin. He is that *Lamb of God that taketh away the ſins of the world*, Joh. 1. 29. He is our ἱλασμὸς and ἱλαστήριον, 1 *Joh.* 2. 2. *Rom.* 3.25. 'Twas not *thouſands of Rams*, or *ten thouſands of Rivers of Oyl*, could have born any proportion in point of ſatisfaction for our ſins. 'Twas not all the Legal Sacrifices of old could do any thing, nor can all our duties now; but Chriſt is All in expiating for ſin, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7, compared with *Heb.* 10. 14. And ſuch is the fulneſs of Chriſts ſatisfaction, that he hath not only freed ſuch as are united unto him, from *condemnation*, *Rom.* 8.1, but purchaſed for them the Adoption of children, *Rom.* 8. 14, 15, 16. And thus Chriſt is All in removing this Bar, and opening this dore to ſalvation, which (had it not been for his Mediation) would for ever have remained ſhut againſt all the Children of men. The pollution and prevalency of corruption, how great an impediment this is to ſalvation and happineſs, was typified by the Lepers and unclean perſons of old, who were not admitted within the Camp. Heaven is no common receptacle for all perſons, as *Noahs* Ark was for all ſorts of creatures; *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God?* 1 Cor. 6. 9. Know ye not? if ye know any thing in Religion, you cannot but know thus much. In the Church of God on earth there is a mixture of Corn with Chaff, of Wheat with Tares, of good Fiſh with bad, of Sheep with Goats; but there ſhall be a ſeparation of the precious from the vile, and God will come with his *fan in his hand, and throughly purge his floor*, Luk. 3. 17. Do but conſider and pauſe a while upon that miſchief which ſin hath done poor creatures by its pollution. How hath it ſtained their glory? caſt them down from their excellency? turned Angels into Devils, and debaſed Man, who was once almoſt the top of the whole Creation, in whom all the ſcattered Excellencies in the Book of Nature were bound up together in one Volume, and met together in a bleſſed union? How unlike hath ſin made us to what God at firſt made us? Thoſe ſouls of ours which were once as ſo many pure beams of Light, how is the beauty of them now blotted and darkned? But Chriſt is that *Fountain opened for*

Lev. 13. 46.

sin and uncleanness, Zech. 13. 1. in his blood is vertue enough to fetch out scarlet spots and crimson stains, *Isa.* 1. 18; and if any of the children of men perish in their pollutions, 'tis not because he wants sufficiency, but
Joh. 3. 16. because they want faith. Christ is All in the business of cleansing and purifying. But alas, besides the pollution of sin, there is the prevalency of it This was to St. *Paul* so great an affliction, that he who could bear the greatest of outward afflictions patiently, 2 *Cor.* 11. 23, 24, 25, *&c.* cannot but express something of an holy impatience under this burthen, *Rom.* 7. 24. He that could triumph over *Principalities, Powers, Life, Death*, &c. *Rom.* 8. 38, 39, is yet more than a little discouraged when he reflects upon the corruptions he found lodging in his own heart. Corruption is the great Tyrant that hath usurped over the whole world; the bounds of its dominion are almost as large as all mankind; there is not a man in all the world (except the first man *Adam* made after Gods Image, and the second *Adam* who was God as well as man), but he is born a slave, a Vassal to this Usurper. The four great successive Monarchies, *Chaldean, Persian, Grecian, Roman*, though the extent of them were great, and the circumference vast, yet were all these limited and bounded, some parts of the World there were which knew nothing of their yoke. But alas the Empire of Corruption reaches every corner of the earth, every person born into the world. We may therefore not unfitly compare it to *Nebuchadnezzars* Tree, *Dan.* 4. 11, the top whereof reaches Heaven, from thence it threw the Angels, and the boughs thereof spreading themselves to the ends of the earth; yea, this vassalage unto Corruption, as it is the largest and universalest, so also the miserablest and most dreadful. All other slaveries compared with this, are but like *Rehoboams* Government compared to his Father *Solomons*, the least finger of whose Dominion, he threatens should be heavier than his Fathers loins, 1 *King.* 12. 10. We read in Scripture of an *Egyptian* slavery; in History of the *Spartan* slavery, and of the *Turkish*; all these sad and lamentable: but yet all these reached but the body, and that for a time only; whereas the slavery of Corruption reaches the soul, and that for ever, unless Christ become our Jesus in saving us from our sins, *Mat.* 1. 21. He hath purchased our freedom, and that with a great sum, as the Centurion speaks of his *Roman* freedom, *Acts* 22. 26, 27, 28. There are none can say with St. *Paul*, they are born free, except they who are born again, and they are free indeed, *John* 8. 36. Christ is All in removing this Impediment also, in setting our poor captive souls at liberty from the bonds and fetters of our corruption, *Rom.* 6. 6, 7, 8, &c. *Rom.* 7. 25. 'Tis he alone can conquer these great *Goliahs*, these untamed affections; but yet even this deliverance is also incompleat in this world, he delivers his people from corruption as to the reign and dominion of it, though not as to the presence and disturbance of it, *ut non regnet sed nondum ut non sit.*

3. The oppositions of Satan, his wiles and subtilties, these are another impediment, and that no small one neither: for if our first Parents, in whom there was nothing of ignorance, but a sufficiency of knowledg; there was indeed a nescience of many things, so is there also in the Angels, *Mat.* 24. 36; but yet their knowledg was both full and clear in things necessary

ceſſary and pertinent, *Col.* 3. 10. This was no ſmall advantage againſt the methods of Satan, becauſe his uſual way of miſchieving poor creatures, hath not been ſo much by force as fraud; not as a Lyon, but as a Serpent; not ſo much by conquering, as cheating; acting all his enmity under a pretence of friendſhip; and tempting us to no evil, but under the pretence of ſome good. The advantage of our firſt Parents was in this reſpect great, in reſpect of their knowledg. Beſides, in them was nothing of weakneſs, but a ſufficiency of ſtrength; in them was nothing of corruption, but an univerſal rectitude and uprightneſs. The ways by which Satan ordinarily prevails, is either by our ignorance, or by our weakneſs, or elſe by making a party within us againſt our ſelves. The advantages of our firſt Parents were in all theſe reſpects far greater than any have againſt Satan now; yet Satan prevailed againſt them. What cauſe therefore have we to fear, 2 *Cor.* 11. 3? But *Chriſt is all* to free us from theſe dangers, to carry us through theſe oppoſitions, who *hath led captivity captive*, Eph. 4. 8. *Who hath ſpoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them*, Col. 2. 15. but yet even this deliverance is at preſent incompleat; for though Chriſt hath delivered Believers from Satan as a *deſtroyer*, yet not from Satan as a *tempter*; he may diſquiet ſuch, but he cannot ruine them.

4. The diſturbances and interruptions of a prophane World, its allurements, diſcouragements, promiſes, threats, ſmiles, frowns, our difficulties and dangers from hence cannot be little, ſince the people of God in all ages have found them ſo great: the great advantage which all theſe outward things have againſt us, is their ſuitableneſs to our ſenſes; for though believers are ſaid to *live by faith*, Heb. 10. 38, yet the beſt of men have had ſomething to witneſs they were but *men of like paſſions*, as 'twas ſaid of *Elias*, Jam. 5. 17. but Chriſt is All to free us from theſe dangers, *Joh.* 16. 33, θαρσεῖτε *Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*: He hath overcome it *for* us, and in ſome meaſure *in* us.

2. *Chriſt is All*, to fill the ſouls of believers with all that good which may capacitate and qualifie them for happineſs: it is the decree of Heaven that none be admitted into glory but thoſe on whom God hath wrought the truth of grace; Heaven muſt firſt be brought down into our ſouls, before our ſouls are capable of aſcending up thither; we muſt firſt be made meet, before we can *partake of that inheritance of the Saints in light*, Col. 1. 12, with *Epheſ.* 5. 5. We are by nature unmeet, becauſe we are carnal and earthly; and ſhould God diſpence with his own Decree, and open ſo wide a dore unto Heaven and happineſs, as to let in carnal and ſenſual perſons, Heaven would be no Heaven unto ſuch; carnal hearts can never reliſh the ſweetneſs of ſpiritual enjoyments. Philoſophers obſerve, that all delights Rom. 8. 6, 7. ariſe from a ſuitableneſs betwixt the perſon and the object. What is the reaſon of that diverſity of delights which is among the children of men, that which is one mans joy is another man grief, and that which is one mans pleaſure is another mans pain? the only reaſon is, becauſe of the diverſity of tempers and diſpoſitions: Some there be of ſuch a bruitiſh and ſwiniſh temper, that nothing is ſo pleaſing unto them as wallowing in the mire of their ſenſualities: others again of ſo refined a temper, that

they esteem these sensual pleasures very low and much beneath them; but still every mans delight is according to his temper and disposition; and therefore Heaven would be so far from being a Heaven unto such, that it would be a kind of Hell to them; for as delight arises from an harmony betwixt the person and the object, so all kind of torment from an unsuitableness and contrariety: hence is it, that although God vouchsafes us something of Heaven here on earth, *viz.* in his Ordinances, yet to unheavenly hearts every thing of this nature is a *tædium*, a burden: *When will the new Moon be gone that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat*, &c? Amos 8. 5. *Ælian* reports of one *Nicostratus*, who being a skilful Artificer, and finding a curious piece of Art, was so much taken therewith, that a spectator beholding him so intent in viewing the workmanship, asked him what pleasure he could take in gazing so long upon such an object? he answers, hadst thou my eyes, thou wouldst be as much ravished as I am. So may we say of carnal persons, had they the hearts and dispositions of believers, they would be as much delighted with all means of communion with God, as they are; and account that their priviledge which now they esteem their vexation: the Greeks tell us, that Καλὸν good, is derived ἀπὸ τῦ καλῶν from calling, becaufe all good is of an attractive and magnetick nature, to draw forth and call our affections after it; but yet 'tis not the intrinsecal excellency of any object that renders it taking with us, but our affections are accordingly exercised upon all kinds of objects, as representations are of those objects from the understanding; for 'tis the understanding which sits at the stern of the soul, that is the *primum mobile*, the master-wheel that puts the affections as so many lesser wheels upon motion; therefore unless our judgements be both enlightned and sanctified, we can never *approve the things that are excellent.* Naturalists observe, that though the Loadstone hath an attractive virtue to draw Iron to it, yet it cannot exercise that virtue upon Iron that's rusty. Ignorance is the rust of the soul, that blunts the edge of our affections to whatsoever is spiritually good: there must be therefore some kind of suitableness and harmony betwixt our souls and heavenly mercies, before we are capable of tasting the sweetness of them. Now *Christ is All* to believers in this respect also: 'tis *from his fulness they receive and grace for grace*, Joh. 1. 16. That we have any thing of grace, it is from him; and that we have such a degree or measure of grace, it is from him: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly*, Joh. 10. 10. the essence and the abundance are both from him. All those miracles which Christ wrought in the dayes of his flesh upon the bodies of poor creatures, in restoring sight to the blind, speech, to the dumb, life to the dead, all these does Christ work over again upon the souls of them whom he prepares for Heaven.

Ephes. 5. 8.
Ephes 2. 5, 10.

3. *Christ is All* to fill all Ordinances with power and efficacy; these are the means of salvation, and through his concurrence, effectual means; as they are his institutions, we are under an obligation of using them; and as they have the promise of his presence, we are warranted in our expectations of benefit from them: but yet Ordinances are but empty

Matth. 28. 20.
Matth. 18. 20.

pipes

pipes, but dry breasts, unless Christ be pleased to fill them, who *filleth All in All*, Ephes. 1. 23. That there should be such a might and efficacy in things so weak; such miraculous and strange effects by means so inconsiderable; that the foolishness of preaching should be powerful to salvation, 'tis because it is not man but God that speaks. *Joh.* 5. 25, *The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.* Look upon Ordinances in themselves, and so they are τὰ μὴ ὄντα, *things that are not*; but as they are accompanied with the power of Christ, *so they bring things to nought that are*, 1 Cor. 1. 28. 'Tis he whom in Baptism baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire, *Matth.* 3. 11. 'Tis he in preaching the Word, speaks not only to the ear, but the heart, *Luke*, 24. 32. *Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* In a word, *Christ is All* in every Ordinance in respect of efficacy; while the Disciples fished alone, *they caught nothing*; but when Christ is with them, the draught of fishes is so great they are scarce able to draw it, *John* 21. 3, 6.

4. *Christ is All* to fill every condition with comfort; the best of conditions is not good without him, nor is the worst bad with him. *Alexander* accounted himself to live so many dayes as he obtained victories: but *David* account shimself to live more in one days communion with God, than in a thousand dayes enjoyment of all earthly comforts, *Psal.* 84. 10. yea in the midst of all his earthly confluences, he looks upon all as nothing in comparison of communion with God, *Psal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.* Though he had a Kingdom, he values not that; and well might *David* be of this mind, for could we add Kingdom to Kingdom, and world to world, yet all these in comparisom of the least smile or love-token from God, are no better than nothing, for *thy loving kindness is better than life*, *Psal.* 63. 3. The ancient Philosophers distinguished betwixt *bona* καθ' φύσιν and *bona* καθ' τίμην, some things good in their own nature, thus only God, *Matth.* 19. 17. *There is none good but one, that is God:* others good by way of opinion or estimation, and thus all the Comforts of this life; whence that maxime of the Stoicks, εἰδὲ εὐδαιμονία, life is but opinion and phancie, and whatever good is in these things, is but like those pictures of most deformed and monstrous creatures, which the Poet tells us had no other beauty than what they owed to the Painters courtesie, *viz.* the off-spring of our own phancies: Those who were vertuous, were only by the Philosophers accounted to live; others might *degere*, but not *vivere*, they might be, but they could not live. The only true comfort of life consists in living in communion with God, 'tis his presence fills Heaven with all its glory, and 'tis his presence that fills every condition with all its sweetness: But alas, *how can two walk together except they be agreed?* and what agreement can there be betwixt light and darkness, the glorious Majesty of Heaven and sinful dust, but only through a Mediator? and the only *Mediator is Jesus Christ*. What was it that enabled the blessed Martyrs, to account the scorching flames to be beds of Roses? What

Ubi bene sine te, aut ubi malecum te Bern.

Non dicit nihil habeo sed nihil concupisco; Muse *in loc.*

Amos 3. 3.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

Rom 8. 38, 39.

was

was it that enabled St. *Paul* to triumph over all kind of adversaries, but only the *love of God in Christ Jesus*? herein alone consists our comfort, our happiness. Now *Christ is All* in this respect also.

5. *Christ is All*, in furnishing us with strength and assistance to persevere: the way to Heaven is no smooth or easie way, but beset with many difficulties, τεθλιμμένη ἡ ὁδος, *Matth.* 7. 14, and *through many tribulations must we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Act. 14. 22. yea though the calmness of our passage through this world should be in a perfect serenity from all outward enemies, yet can we not expect a total freedom from the worst of enemies, our own hearts, our corruptions. All the prejudices and mischeifs we either do or can suffer from others, are nothing to what we suffer from our selves; 'tis not *homo homini lupus*, but *homo sibi lupus*, men are to none such Wolves as to their own souls. Now in as much as the Crown of happiness is reserved for the head of perseverance; and in as much as perseverance in conflicting with such kind of adversaries, as though we conquer them, yet they are in us; and though we vanquish them, yet still we carry them about us, must needs require a greater strength than our own: it cannot but be esteemed an eminent priviledge, to be under the continual supplies of Christ by his Spirit, that after *we have put our hand to Gods plough, we may not look back*; and after we have *begun in the spirit*, we may not *end in the flesh*. I speak not this as doubting the perseverance of them who are sincere, but as declaring the true foundation on which their perseverance is bottom'd, *viz.* not any inherent strength they have in themselves, but those supplies of grace and strength they continually derive from Christ: there is a vast difference 'twixt the best of Christians considered singly in themselves, and considered relatively in respect of their union unto Christ: in themselves so weak and impotent that they *can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. not *sufficient of themselves to think any thing as of themselves*, 2 Cor. 3. 5. and yet what can be less than to think? but in Christ mighty and powerful, able to do and bear whatever God would have them, *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*, Phil 4. 13. and thus is *Christ* the Christians *All*, thus are they *compleat in him*.

Rev. 2. 20.

Rom. 8. 24.

Luke. 9. 26. Gal. 3. 3.

Non dicit, parum potestis facere, vel difficulter potestis facere, vel nihil potestis perficere, sed nihil facere. Aug. *in loc.*

Col. 2. 10.

2. How *Christ is all*? The resolution of this Quæry is therefore necessary, because many there are who instead of sucking milk from this Doctrine, are ready to suck poyson; but for prevention of all dangerous and unsafe inferences from this great truth, consider

1. Negatively, how *Christ* is not *All*; not so as to excuse us from all endeavours in the use of means for *working out our own salvation*. Christs sufficiency does not excuse but ingage our industry: for thus the Apostle argues, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13, *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do*, q. d. it is God does all, therefore do you what you can.

2. Positively or affirmatively, and that in these two respects especially.

1. *Christ is All* by way of *Impetration*, in as much as our salvation was his purchase; we may say of our hopes, our helps, our advantages, as the

the Chief Priest said of the moneys which *Judas* had received for the hire of his perfidiousness: *It is the price of blood*, Matth. 27. 6. Whence is it that they who have brought themselves under the deserts of Hell, may have hopes of Heaven? enjoy the means of Heaven? taste the first fruits of Heaven? all are the price of Christs blood: 'twas by his own blood that he entred into Heaven himself, and hath opened the door to Heaven for all that are incorporated into him, *Heb.* 9. 12. *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. Eph. 5. 25, 26 27. Act. 20. 28. John 15. 13.

2. *Christ is all* by way of *Application*, in as much as he brings home the blessings he hath purchased unto the souls of his; he hath not only purchased salvation for *them*, but *them* for it; not only the possibility of Heaven, but a real propriety in it: and certainly propriety is absolutely necessary unto the refreshment of every comfort: What are all the treasures of either or both the *Indies*, to him who only hears of them, but meer stories? What all the glories of Heaven to him who is thrust from the enjoyment of them? but meer torments. There must be a propriety in all spiritual blessings, before they can be refreshing: and this alone from Christ. *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am ye may be there also.* And what is clearly asserted in these Scriptures, is strongly intimated in those emblems by which Christ is described. What the Root is to the Tree, the Vine to the branches, the head to the body, all this is Christ to believers, *viz.* not only a treasury of all good, but a fountain continually streaming down all kind of spiritual blessings into their souls: and though faith be both the eye that discerns, and the hand that receives all from Christs fulness, yet 'tis he that by his Spirit works this grace in us. Faith is our *act*, but it is his *gift*; 'tis we that believe, but 'tis Christ enables us to believe: so that both in purchasing and applying salvation, *Christ is All.* John 10. 28. John. 14. 3. Col. 2. 7. John 15. 1, 5. Eph. 1. 22, 23 Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29.

3. What advantage is it to believers to have their *All* in Christ?

1. Because our salvation could have been in no hand so safe, so sure as in the hand of Christ: had it been in our hand by any inherent righteousness, our sad experience we have had of our own unfaithfulness, in sinning away that happiness wherein we were created, may cause us for ever to be jealous of our selves; but to have it in the hand of him who *i* mighty to save even to the utmost, who is so faithful that in all our distresses he is touched with our infirmities; we cannot be so sensible of our own miseries, but Christ is much more: and hence it is that as we have no other Saviour besides him, so is it impossible we should have any like unto him. Psal. 89. 19. Isa. 63. 1. Heb. 4. 15. Heb. 7. 25. Act. 4. 12.

2. Because our salvation could have been in no way so comfortable: because as God hath the *glory* of every attribute, so have Christians the *comfort* of every attribute in *this way* of salvation; for as God hath the glory of his Justice from them (in their Head and surety) to whom in *this way* he shews mercy; *mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.* Justice it self, that dreadful attribute to guilty creatures, is in *this way* of salvation so far from being their enemy, that it becomes their friend, and speaks nothing but what is to their encouragement. Psal. 85. 10.

ment. And hence it is that ſincere believers have from the very *juſtice* of God, anſwered all manner of diſcouragements ariſing from their ſins.

Rom. 8. 34. *Who is he that condemneth, it is Chriſt that died?* i. e. ſince God hath already received ſatisfaction from Chriſt, he cannot in *juſtice* require it from the members of Chriſt, but is *juſt* in the *juſtifying him that believeth in*

Rom. 3. 26. Prov. 28. 13. with 1 Joh. 1. 9. *Jeſus; and if we confeſs and forſake our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs*: Thus hath the Juſtice of God been their great ſupport in the time of their outward dan-

Pſal. 89. 14. gers alſo, *Juſtice and Judgment are the habitation of his Throne.* In a word, this way of Salvation (which was the contrivance of infinite wiſdom, and is in it ſelf ſo myſterious, that the Angels delight to look into it) does ſo fully correſpond with the condition of poor, weak, ſinful, mutable creatures, that it layes a double obligation of praiſe upon us, that ſalvation is poſſible, and that the way of ſalvation is ſo compleat and full.

The Doctrinal part of this Obſervation being thus cleared, one word by way of Application.

Uſe 1. If Chriſt be All, then is there no ground of deſpondency either from your own defectiveneſs, or the defectiveneſs of all creature-helps. Your duties are defective; your endeavours defective; your

Phil. 3. 9. very righteouſneſs unſafe to confide in; But though you have nothing in your ſelves, yet if you have an intereſt in Chriſt, you need nothing more, becauſe in *Chriſt* you have *All.*

1. You have the ſumme of All. Though you have not eſtates, friends, worldly comforts; yet in Chriſt you have what does more than make up the want of all theſe. We may be as impatiently deſirous of this and that

Gen. 30. 1. earthly comfort, as *Rachel* was of children, whom we find quarrelling with *Jacob*, *Give me children, or elſe I dye.* But what *Elkanah* ſaid to

1 Sam. 1. 8. *Hannah* in the like condition, *Am I not better to thee than ten ſons?* the ſame we may ſay much more to perſons intereſted in Chriſt, Is not Chriſt better to you than all? The abſence of the Ciſtern may well be diſpenſed with, by him who lives at the Fountain; and the light of a Candle, by him who enjoys the Sun. All thoſe ſeeming contradictions, which ſo frequently occurr in Scripture, can no other wayes be reconciled, but by the acknowledgment of this, *E. gr. A father of the fatherleſs*: How can they be fatherleſs who have a father? Thus we read of them who were *rich* in the midſt of *poverty*, who having *nothing*, *poſſeſſed All things*; joyful in the midſt of ſorrows, *i. e.* though they had not theſe com-

Pſal. 68. 5. Jam. 2. 5. forts, yet they had an intereſt in him who is infinitely more and better than all thoſe comforts. Nay, as to inherent righteouſneſs,

2 Cor. 6. 10. though you cannot attain a perfection, yet in Chriſt is perfection. He is All.

2. You have in him the pledg of All; according to the Apoſtles argumentation, *Rom.* 8. 32; *How ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us All things?* The Inference is ſtrong: Had there been any one mercy that God had thought too great, too much for worthleſs creatures, it would certainly have been this; but ſince God hath not ſtuck at giving his Son;

this

this instance of Gods bounty is so high, that it removes all grounds of questioning his bounty in any thing else. The Apostle from this mercy, might very well infer a certain subsequence of all other mercies that might be profitable or beneficial: no ground of despondency therefore unto such as are interested in Christ.

Use 2. What cause have we to be thankful for Christ? We have cause to be thankful for the meanest of mercies, inasmuch as we are *less than the least of all*; much more for this which is the highest of mercies: The mercies of our Creation, preservation, *&c.* though never so many and great, are little in comparison of this. 'Tis mentioned as an astonishing act of love, that God should *so love the world as to give his only Son*, &c. Joh. 3. 16. [*so*] beyond all comparison; [*so*] beyound all expression. If God hath given you his Son, 'tis more than if he had given you a whole world, because it is in him that God hath *blessed you with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.* Gen. 32. 10. Ephes. 1. 3.

Use 3. How great is their folly and misery, who keep at a distance from Christ? Our Saviour mentions it as the highest folly in the *Jews*, *You will not come unto me, that you might have life.* There is in Christ the life of Justification, to free us from that eternal death to which the Law sentences us: The life of sanctification, to free us from that spiritual death under which our apostacy hath brought us: There is in him an All-sufficient fulness, for the repairing of all our losses: And are these mercies not worthy the coming for? The Apostle puts the very Emphasis of the Heathens misery in this, that they are *without Christ*, and therefore *without hope:* And what is their misery, shall any of us make our choice? John. 5. 40. Ephes. 2. 12.

Use 1. *Of Exhortation.* Let it be your care that Christ may be *All* to you: 'tis no small, nor is it any common priviledge. Many there are who live *without Christ:* Others to whom All that is in Christ is so far from being to their salvation, that it only aggravates their destruction. He that is to some *the cheif corner stone*, is to others no better than a *stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence.* This was prophesied of Christ; This child shall be *for the fall and rising again of many in Israel.* There's no mercy so eminently good, but through our corruptions it may become an occasion of evil. Christ himself, the greatest of mercies that ever God vouchsafed to creatures, is yet so far from saving some from their sins, that he only encreases their sin. *If I had not come and spoke unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.* Those who enjoyed the Ministry of Christ in his own person, and were not wrought upon thereby, all their sins would comparatively have been a kind of innocence, had they not discovered such an height of obstinacy: 'tis therefore no common priviledge. But what should we do that it may be ours? Take these few Directions. Ephes. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 6, 8. John 15. 22.

1. Labour to get your judgements setled in the belief of this great truth, That all things in the world are a very nothing without Christ: That you are poor in the midst of worldly riches, and miserable in the midst of all earthly happiness, while you remain in your estrangements

from Christ: And that of all kind of poverty and misery, this is the worst, because it is in those spiritual blessings wherein consists both our present and future happiness. 'Tis but little those persons understand of their great concernments, that can with that Gospel-fool, think themselves sufficiently provided for in the things of this world, and say to their souls
Luk. 12. 19. as he to his, *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years, eat, drink and be merry.* Dost thou know thou livest in this world upon the very brink of eternity? And dost thou know whether there be more than *one step between* thee and another world? And canst thou take up with any thing
1 Sam. 20, 3. on this side Christ? it is an Argument you know but little of your own concernments. Some of the grosser *Platonists* thought the world to be a great *Animal*, and the soul which acted it was God; now if the soul be departed from the body, what is it but a meer carkass without life? Christ is the very life and soul of all our comforts, and without him all our creature-enjoyments are but as so many cyphers without a figure, which have no significancy in them, but are so many nothings. Nothing in respect of true comfort here; nothing in respect of your preparations for another world. Labour therefore through the glass both of Scripture and experience, to behold all the excellencies of this world, as so many bladders
Gen. 21. 15. filled with wind, and at best, to be like *Hagars* Bottle, which was soon empty; or as *Broken Cisterns*; *Cisterns*, and therefore cannot hold much;
Jre. 2. 13. *broken Cisterns*, and therefore cannot hold what they have long. And withal, let it be your wisdom to look upon Christ, as that everlasting Fountain of all good, which can never be drawn dry, as that never failing Spring of all those blessings which will not only sweeten every condition here, but go with us beyond death and the grave. Such fixed apprehensions of these things will be singularly useful to engage our souls in an
Psal. 63. 8. earnest pursuit after Christ, or in the Psalmists words, *to follow hard after him*; and 'tis his promise, that they *that come to him, he will in no wise cast out*, John 6. 37.

2. Be speedy in casting out those inmates, which because they are
1 Sam. 5. 4. unmeet companions for Christ, may hinder his taking possession of your
Amos 3. 3. souls. The *Ark* and *Dagon* could not stand together in the same room, but if the *Ark* stands, *Dagon* falls. Can two walk together except they be agreed? Christ and our corruptions are at no agreement, these two cannot dwell together under the same roof. If you would have Christ to take up his abode in your hearts, you must prepare a place for him; It
Psal. 132. 4, 5. was said of *David*, he would neither give *sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids*, till he had found out an habitation for the mighty God of *Jacob*: The souls of most men are so crowded with other guests, that the best entertainment they can afford Christ, is but such as he found in his first entrance into the world, an out-room, a stable, a manger: But let it be
Psal. 45. 10, 11, your care to renounce communion with all things that might hinder your communion with him, to *forget thy own people, and thy Fathers house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty*; so, not other-wayes, he will have no rivals, no competitors, not a part of our heart, but all.

Matth. 16. 24. 3. Be willing to accept of Christ upon his own terms: there can be no terms

terms hard on which we may gain an interest in him. The great and main condition is self-denial, together with a full resignation of our selves to him; and Self-denial, if duly considered, is the greatest Self-advantage. 1. Because he calls us not to deny our selves in any thing that is truly for our spiritual good, or at least so far as 'tis for our good. 2. Though he calls us to deny our selves in many outward good things, yet 'tis not so much to part with them, as to exchange them for what is better. 3. The main objects of Slef-denial are those things which 'tis our privileg to be free from; no reason therefore to be offended at such terms as these, to resign up our mistaken judgments to the guidance of infinite Wisdom, our corrupt wills to his most holy and gracious will, to be in all things at the command of him, whose commands are in nothing *grievous*, but in all things *truth* and *righteousness*. Be therefore as willing to be his, as you are desirous he should be yours; the consent must be mutual, or else the match can never be made up 'twixt Christ and your souls.

1 John 5. 3. Psal. 119. 151, 172.

4. Measure all things by their reference unto Christ: of all good things, account them the best which may promote your endeavours after that good which is the highest; as Ordinances, the means of Grace, which at how high a rate they are valued by *David*, may appear from his pathetical, and most affectionate desires of waiting upon God in them; of all evil things account them the worst which estrange you from Christ the truest good; and therefore let your only impatience be of sin, as that which only *separates between you and your God*. The observation of this rule will very much secure you from all diversions, and quicken you in your endeavours after an interest in Christ.

Psal. 27. 4. Psal. 42. 1, 2. Psal. 63. 1, 2. Isa. 59. 2.

2. *Use*. Be serious in resolving this great Question, whether Christ who is All to sincere Christians, be All to you; 'tis a question of that importance, that all your comfort depends upon the resolution of it, yea all your hopes. Take these two Characters.

1. Are you conformable unto Christ? Is the same *mind in you* that *was in him*? Are you holy and humble, and Self-denying, and in all things followers of that pattern which he hath set before you in his own example? *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. *Old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. Causes are best known by their effects, Trees by their fruits, Fountains by their streams; So is our interest in Christ by this effect thereof, our conformity unto Christ.

Rom. 8. 9. Philip. 2. 5.

2. Are you All to him: 'Tis but a just retaliation in Christians to be so; and 'tis withal an evidence that Christ is All to them.

1. Are you All to him in your *affections*, in prizing him above All? can you with the Spouse esteem the love of Christ *better than wine*? with *David*, *better than life*? can you in the midst of all your creature-comforts account all as nothing in comparison of him? and say with *Asaph*, *Whom have I in heaven but God? and there is none on earth I desire in comparison of him*. So high were *Moses* affections, that he esteems *the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*. And indeed, if Christ be

Psal. 63. 3. Psal. 73. 25. Cant. 1. 2. Heb. 11. 26.

but an underling in our affections, 'tis an argument we have no part in him, *He that loveth Father or Mother more than me, is not worthy of me; he that loveth son or daugher more than me, is not worthy of me.* The affections are the truest pulse of the soul, the most genuine and natural symptomes of its frame and temper. 'Tis these that speak the proper idiom and language of the heart. Make use of this rule therefore; Is Christ uppermost in thy heart? thy affection to him, is an evidence of his to thee. Matth. 10. 37.

2. Are you All to him in your *acknowledgments*, in ascribing All to him? Thus St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. 15. 10, *By the grace of God I am what I am.* That my condition is not better, it is from my self; that 'tis so good, 'tis from him. So *Eph.* 5. 20.

3. Are you All to him in your *contentment* and satisfaction, accounting you have All in him, though you have nothing besides him. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither fruits be in the Vine, the labour of the Olive shall fail,* &c. *yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* Hab. 3. 17, 18.

4. Are you All to him in your *dependances* and expectations, in seeking All from him? the highest condition of grace, needs further grace, but in Christ are all supplies; 'tis an argument of our interest in him, when in all distresses we make him our refuge, in all weaknesses our strength.

5. Are you All to him in your designs and aims, in seeking his glory beyond your private advantages? this was St. *Paul's* design in life and death, that *Christ* might *be magnified*, Philip. 1. 20. and if you be thus All to Christ, 'tis an evidence Christ is All to you. And how well are they provided for, who have him who is All, for their Portion?

How

How ſhall thoſe Merchants keep up the life of Religion, who, while at home, enjoyed all Goſpel-Ordinances; and when abroad, are not only deſtitute of them, but expoſed to perſecution?

Pſal. CXX. 5.

Wo is me, that I ſojourn in Meſech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.

THis Pſalm is the firſt of thoſe fifteen which are called *Songs of Degrees*; concerning which, the conjectures of Interpreters are various and uncertain; either becauſe they were ſung by the *Jews* at their ſeveral ſtages in their return from the *Babyloniſh* captivity; or by the Levites on the fifteen ſteps, or ſtairs, whereby they went up to the houſe of the Lord; or becauſe they raiſed up their voices to an high ſtrain in ſinging them; or becauſe they are Pſalms of greateſt uſe and excellency.

The Pſalm is generally thought to be compoſed upon occaſion of *Davids* flying from *Saul*, and *Doegs* falſe accuſation of him; and it conſiſts of three general parts; 1 Sam. 22. 23.

1. *Davids* carriage towards God in the time of his diſtreſs, *verſ.* 1, 2, *In my diſtreſs I cryed unto the Lord, and he heard me: Deliver my ſoul*, &c.

2. *Davids* denouncing of judgment againſt his ſlanderous falſe-tongued enemy, *verſ.* 3, 4, *What ſhall be given?* intimating that he expected ſome great reward for his malice againſt *David*; but ſaith the Pſalmiſt, he ſhall have *ſharp arrows of the Almighty, with coals of juniper*, q. d. whatever reward he have from men, this ſhall be his reward from God.

3. *Davids*

3. *Davids* bewailing his preſent condition, *v.* 5, 6, 7. The words of the Text are a branch of the third general part of the Pſalm; wherein we have *David* ſadly breathing forth the ſorrow of his heart for his abſence from the Tabernacle and the company of good men, and his dwelling among, and converſe with evil and wicked men, *Wo is me*, &c.

By *ſojourning* I ſuppoſe is implied his abſence from ſome deſired habitation, *viz. Jeruſalem*, and the Tabernacle: for no man is ſaid to ſojourn at home, and when he is where he would be.

Pſal. 39. 12. 105. 23. Heb. 11. 9.

The word *Meſech* is taken by Expoſitors, either 1. For a place, as our tranſlation carries it from the Chaldee paraphraſe, which is the firſt of the ancient verſions that ſo underſtand it: or 2. For an expreſſion of the prolonging of his ſojourning; for ſo the word משך ſignifies *to draw forth*, or *to prolong*, and thus the Septuagint renders this place, ἡ παροικία μου ἐμακρύνθη whom the Arabick, Syriack, and vulgar Latine verſions follow, with ſome others: and the next verſe ſeems to favour this ſenſe, *v.* 6, *My ſoul hath long dwelt*, &c. but either way gives us the ſame ground of complaint; only the firſt ſenſe doubles the ground of the Pſalmiſts trouble, and the other ſuggeſts the circumſtance of the long continuance of his ſojourning.

משך *eſt trahere*, Iſa. 13. 22. ימיה לא ימשכו *dies ejus non trahentur* i. e. *non prorogabuntur*. Bocarti. Geog. Sacr. par. 1. l. 3. c. 12. p. 209. Bochart. ut ſup.

By *Kedar* is underſtood part of *Arabia*, the inhabitants whereof are called σκηνῖται, or dwellers in tents, becauſe they had no fixed and ſetled habitation, but were robbers, and lived upon the prey.

Now we are not to ſuppoſe that *David* did really ſojourn and dwell among theſe barbarous people; but he ſpeaks this of his wandring about from place to place, without any ſetled habitation; and to ſet forth the cruelty and inhumanity of thoſe among whom he dwelt, he doth expreſs it thus, *Wo is me that I dwell*, &c. as if one living among profeſſed Chriſtians, who deal with him more like ſavages than Chriſtians, ſhould ſay, Wo is me, that I ſojourn among *Turks* and *Saracens*. And thus you ſee *Davids* preſent condition which he bewails, is his abſence from *Jeruſalem* and the Tabernacle, or place of Gods ſolemn worſhip, and his converſe with wicked and ungodly men: and then theſe two truths lie plain before us in the words,

Doct. 1. *It is oftentimes the lot and portion of good men to be deprived of the ſociety of the godly, and of opportunities of Publick ſerving God, and to dwell among, and converſe with wicked and ungodly perſons.*

Doct. 2. *It is a real ground of trouble and ſorrow to a good man to be thus deprived*, &c. 'Twas that which here made *David* proclaim himſelf in a ſtate of wo and miſery; 'twas that which the Apoſtle tells us did vex the righteous ſoul of *Lot*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 17. and which made the holy prophet *Elijah* even weary of his life, 1 *King.* 19. 4. You may eaſily imagine what a ſad heart a poor Lamb might well have, if it be driven from the green paſtures, and ſtill waters, and forced to lodge among Wolves and Foxes, where it muſt feed upon Carrion or ſtarve, and and be continually in danger of being lodged in the bellies of its cruel and bloody companions, unleſs ſome ſecret over-ruling hand do reſtrain their rage, and feed it with wholeſome food; and truly ſuch is the condition of thoſe that follow the Lamb of God in holy

holy Lamb-like qualities, when deprived of green paſtures, and ſtill waters of Goſpel-Ordinances, and forc'd to converſe with wicked and ungodly men.

In handling of this Point I ſhall firſt lay before you the grounds of it, and then adjoyn ſuch practical application as may be uſeful and profitable.

The grounds of this Truth do partly refer to God, partly to wicked men, and partly to the godly themſelves; if in ſuch a condition a believing ſoul either look upwards, or outwards, or inwards, he will ſee much cauſe of grief and trouble.

1. With reference unto God, and that upon a double account:

1. It is a real ground of ſorrow to a believing ſoul to be deprived of occaſions of ſolemn bleſſing and praiſing God; the Soul that is full of the ſenſe of the goodneſs of God, that knows how many thouſand wayes the Lord is continually obliging it to love and bleſs him, cannot but be afflicted in ſpirit, to be kept from making its Publick acknowledgments of divine goodneſs. The Pſalmiſt tells us, *Pſal.* 65. 1, *That praiſe waiteth for God in Sion*; that is, in the Publick Aſſemblies of the Church; and truly 'tis a grief to a believing Soul, not to wait there with his thank-offerings, not to pay his *vows unto the Lord in the preſence of all his people, in the Courts of the Lords houſe, &c.* not to declare to all that fear God, what he hath done for their Souls. Pſal. 116. 17. Pſal. 66. 16.

2. It is a real ground of ſorrow to live among thoſe that are continually reproaching and blaſpheming the Name of God: to ſee ſinners deſpiſe the goodneſs of God, and trample upon his grace and mercy, and ſcorn his love and kindneſs, and kick at his bowels, and ſpit in his face, and ſtab at his heart, who is our God, our Father, our Friend, our good and gracious Lord and King: This muſt needs make the believing Soul cry out, Wo is me that I live among ſuch.

Let us ſuppoſe a perſon that hath been hugely obliged by a Prince to love him, and that indeed loves him as his life, if this Prince ſhould be driven from his Throne, and an uſurper get into his place, would it not be a great affliction, and ſadning to the ſpirit of ſuch a perſon, to live among thoſe who every day revile, reproach, ſcorn and abuſe his gracious Prince? Why Sirs, if you and I be true believers, we know that the Lord is our Soveraign King and Prince, ſuch a one who hath infinitely more obliged us to love him, than 'tis poſſible for any Prince to oblige a Subject; and we doe love the Lord as our lives, nay better than our lives, or elſe we love him not at all; and muſt it not then be matter of grief to hear ungodly ſinners, who have driven God away from their hearts and ſouls, where his Throne ſhould be ſet up, and who have let that grand uſurper the Devil ſet up his throne within them, and among them, and who daily ſay unto God as thoſe wicked ones, *Job* 21. 14, *Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledg of thy ways*; to hear ſuch curſe, and ſwear, and blaſpheme God, and in their lives by wicked ungodly courſes do him all the deſpight and diſhonour that they can, bring his Name to the Tavern, to the Stews, upon the ſtage, and there ſoot and defile the great and

and glorious Name of God with the worſt of polutions; Certainly Sirs, he cannot account God his Friend, his Father, his good and gracious Prince, whoſe eye doth not run down with Rivers of tears to ſee men ſo far from keeping Gods Law.

2. It is a trouble to good men to ſojourn, &c. with reference to thoſe wicked ungodly perſons among whom they live: it grieves their ſouls to ſee ſinners *run into all exceſs of riot*, eagerly purſuing Hell and Damnation, greedily guzling down full draughts of the venome of Aſps, and the poyſon of Dragons; it pities them to ſee ſinners ſtab themſelves to the heart, and laughing at their own plague-ſores, jeſting away God and heaven, and eternal happineſs. If any of us ſhould ſee a company of men ſo far beſotted and diſtracted, as that one ſhould rend and burn the Evidences of a great Inheritance which others labour to deprive him of, another ſhould caſt ineſtimable Pearls and Jewels into the Sea, another eagerly drinking down that which you knew to be the juice of Toads and Spiders, or hugging a Viper and Scorpion in his boſome; another ſtabbing himſelf in the breaſt; another laughing at, and licking his own plague ſores, and all of them reviling, curſing, ſtriking, ſpitting in the face, and ſtabbing at the heart of thoſe that any wayes endeavour to hinder them from deſtroying themſelves, or that will not do as they do, and be as mad as themſelves, ſhould we not pity them, and with grief of heart ſay, *Wo is me that I live among ſuch*?

Why Sirs, he that hath had any ſerious thoughts of Eeternity, that hath ſoberly conſidered the worth of an immortal ſoul, that believes the Holineſs, Juſtice, and Power of God, that underſtands the evil of ſin, what a plague, what a Venome, what a dagger at the ſinners own heart, ſin is, he cannot but ſee and know that every ungodly prophane ſinner is much more an object of higheſt compaſſion, than any I have now mentioned, and therefore cannot but cry out, *Wo is me*, &c.

3. It is a treuble to good men to ſojourn, &c. with reference to themſelves, and their own concernments, becauſe they are ſenſible that ſuch a condition layes them open to a great deal of danger; and that

Pſal. 36. 8. 65. 4.

1. In regard of their graces: for the want of the Society of good men, and the Ordinances of the Goſpel, is like the want of dew and rain to the Graſs, or Food to the Body; and therefore thoſe who have taſted of *the ſweetneſs and fatneſs*, and know what a bleſſedneſs 'tis to be *ſatisfied with the goodneſs* of Gods houſe, cannot but mourn over the want of Goſpel-Ordinances; as the preſence of the Sun-beams make the flowers to be freſh and beautiful, and yield a fragrant ſmell; whereas the want thereof makes them look pale and wan, and hang the head; even ſo the enjoyment of good Society and Goſpel-Ordinances, makes the Graces of a Believer amiable and lovely, and give forth their pleaſant ſmell, the want of which makes them very much to droop and languſh.

And then on the other ſide, the Society of wicked men, the venome and poyſon of an evil example, the alluring flatteries of the world

world on one hand, and its frowns and threanings on the other hand, are of great force to nip and blaſt, to dead and dull the graces of good men.

And therefore he who knows the worth and value of true Grace, that accounts it his Riches, his Treaſure, his Jewel, his Life, and is ſenſible how much depends upon the life and vigour of Grace and Religion in his Soul, and underſtands how deſtructive the want of Goſpel-Ordinances, and the company of evil men are to his Graces, may well cry out, *Wo is me that I ſojourn*, &c. Luke 12. 10.

2. In regard of their perſons, and the concernments of this life; the enmity that is in the ſeed of the Serpent, againſt the ſeed of the Woman, doth not only put forth it ſelf in endeavours to ruin or weaken their graces, but alſo to deſtroy their perſons: wicked mens malice againſt that ſpiritual life of grace in good men, which themſelves do not partake of, doth ſoon improve into malice alſo againſt that natural humane life which themſelves are alſo partakers of; their deſires to ſuck the blood, as I may ſo ſay, of good mens ſouls and graces, makes them delight to ſuck the blood of their bodies; witneſs *Cain*, the firſt that learnt this bloody trade, by killing his brother for no other cauſe, but *becauſe his own works were evil, and his brothers righteous*; witneſs alſo *Ahab* and *Jezabel*, *Manaſſeh*, &c. but the foul-mouthed witneſs to this black and ſad truth, is the ſcarlet bloody Whore of *Babylon*, who is *drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus*, and therefore in Gods due time ſhe ſhall have *blood to drink*; thoſe therefore who underſtand what an helliſh fire of rage is in the hearts of wicked men, how great their malice is againſt goodneſs and good men, and what combuſtible matter our life, and the comforts of this life be, ſo far as they value theſe mercies, have reaſon with *David* to cry out, *Wo is me that I ſojourn in Meſech*, &c. 1 Joh 3. 12. Rev. 17. 6.

And now the woful condition of thoſe that are deprived of Goſpel-Ordinances, and ſojourn where heavenly Manna doth not fall, and who dwell among, and converſe with wicked and ungodly men, as it calls upon us to bleſs God when it is not ſo with us, and to pity and pray for thoſe who have reaſon to take up ſuch a complaint, as *David* here doth; ſo alſo to bethink our ſelves what we ought to do if the caſe were ours; for you know the life of a Chriſtian is very oft, and very fitly in Scripture compared to a warfare; and ſurely he is but a mean ſouldier, and never like to come off with victory and triumph, who doth not prepare himſelf for all kind of aſſults, and doth not labour to fortifie every paſſage, whereat he may be ſtormed; and therefore 'tis good for us to make the condition of others our own; ſo that this queſtion, or practical caſe of conſcience will offer it ſelf to our conſideration.

Queſt. How ſhall thoſe Merchants and others keep up the life of Religion, who while they were at home, enjoyed all Goſpel-Ordinances, but being abroad, are not onely deprived of them, but liable to the Inquiſition, and other wayes of perſecution for their Religion?

Before I anſwer the Caſe, I ſhall a little open it, and lay down ſome

preparatory propoſitions for the right underſtanding of it, and then direct our practiſe.

By Religion we do not underſtand any outward way or form, any pomp and gayeties in worſhipping God; but ſuch a due ſenſe of our dependance upon a good and gracious, Almighty, Holy God, for our being, and well-being, both in Time and to Eternity, as doth powerfully engage the ſoul heartily to love God, and ſincerely to ſerve him, in obeying his good and holy commands made known to us.

By the life of Religion we may underſtand, either 1. The truth and reality of it in the ſoul, in oppoſition to a ſoul dead in ſin; or 2. The vigour, activity and livelineſs of Religion, in oppoſition to a dead, dull, languid principle; and both may be well included in the Queſtion: for as we are all concerned to endeavour, by all fit and lawful means, not only to have our bodies kept from rotting and putrifying by the *ſalt* of *a living ſoul*, but to have them active and vigorous, fit for the employments of a natural life, and not ſtupified with Lethargies and benumming Palſies; even ſo we ought to endeavour, not only that our Souls may be quickened with a true principle of Religion, but that we may have ſuch a lively, vigorous and influencing ſenſe of divine goodneſs upon them, that our Religion may not be a dull, languid, lethargick principle, but may render us fit and prompt for all the actions of a ſpiritual life. And now, this life of Religion, the caſe ſuppoſeth the perſon to have, who needs advice; and then you'l quickly perceive that there be two things in danger.

Salſillum animæ. Plant.

1. The life of Religion in a Religious perſon.

2. The life of a Religious perſon; and ſo the Caſe doth reſolve it ſelf into theſe two Queries:

1. What ſhould believing Chriſtians do to ſupport the life and vigour of Religion in their Souls, when they want the ordinary means of Publick Ordinances, and are indangered by the leavening ſociety of wicked men?

2. How ſhould they preſerve their lives among perſecuting enemies without hazzarding the life of their Religion?

For the clearing of and directing in this caſe, I ſhall now premiſe ſome Propoſitions fit to be taken notice of.

It cannot be expected, that any Rule ſhould be given, according to Scripture, whereby both the one and the other life may be certainly ſecured; for many times Gods providence brings us into ſuch circumſtances, that if we are reſolved, that come what will, wee'l keep our Religion, we muſt loſe our lives: and if we are reſolved to keep our lives, though with the hazzard or ſhipwrack of our Religion, we muſt then part with our Religion, and perhaps our lives too.

2. There can be no certain and infallible courſe propounded whereby the life of the body may be ſecured with the loſs of Religion; though Devil and world bid fair, and promiſe we ſhall live and do well if we will part with our Religion, yet they are not able, if willing, to make good their promiſe, ſo long as there be ſo many thouſand wayes to death beſides

Martyr-

Martyrdom; and this is the purport of that threatning expreſſion, *Matth. 16. 25, Whoſoever will ſave his life ſhall loſe it*, not only that eternal life which is the only true life, but even this temporal life; as many relations tell us.

3. The life of Religion in the ſoul, is that which by Gods bleſſing and our ſpiritual care and induſtry may be infallibly ſecured in any place, among any perſons, in any condition; I do not ſay the outward exerciſe of Religion, but that which is the life and principle of Religion in the ſoul may be preſerved. Force and violence may deprive thoſe that are Religious, of opportunities to meet together, and pour forth their *Common-prayers* and ſupplications to God, and publickly ſing forth the praiſes of God, and hear the great Truths of the Goſpel preached unto them; nay, they may be hindred from ſpeaking with their mouths, either to God, or for God; as many of the Martyrs have been gagged: but all the force and violence in the world cannot take away that which is the principle and life of Religion (unleſs we our ſelves betray and caſt it from us), nor can they hinder the prime and principal acts and exerciſes of Religion. All the world cannot hinder you or me from having good thoughts of God, from ſanctifying the Lord God in our hearts, from truſting in, hoping in, rejoycing in the goodneſs and mercy of God through Jeſus Chriſt; from making holy melody in our hearts, and ſuch muſick as ſhall be heard beyond the ſphears, though he that ſtands at our elbow knows not a word we ſpeak; ſo that true Religion both in the principle and prime exerciſes of it, may be infallibly ſecured, inſomuch that he who can rend the heart out of the Body, cannot tear Religion out of the Soul.

4. His Soul cannot be quickned with the life of the Religion of the Goſpel, who is not in heart perſwaded, that the ſecuring the life of Religion in his Soul is hugely more his concernment, than the preſerving the life of the body. Yea, his Religion is built upon a Sandy foundation, who hath not ſeriouſly conſidered, that for ought he knows, his Religion may coſt him his life, and hath not brought his ſoul to an humble reſolution to lay down his life, rather than let go his Religion: thus much is clearly imported in that paſſage, *Luk. 14. 27, 28, &c. Which of you intending to build a tower, ſitteth not down firſt and counteth the coſt*, &c.

5. The ſociety of good men, and enjoyment of Goſpel-Ordinances, is of ſpecial uſe to preſerve, quicken and enliven the principle of Religion in the Soul; they are to Religion in the Soul, what Food is to the natural life of the Body: and therefore the Ordinances in the Church, are compared to *breaſts of Conſolation*, *Iſa. 66. 11.* The great deſign of God in appointing Goſpel-Ordinances is, that by the help and aſſiſtance of thoſe Gifts and Graces which he beſtows upon his Miniſters, the Souls of thoſe who are eſtranged from him, ſhould be brought home to the owning and acknowledging of the truth; and that thoſe who have returned to the Lord, ſhould be more and more affected with a ſenſe of Divine Goodneſs, and their dependance on the Lord for all they have and hope for; and indeed if Preaching, and Reading, and Praying, and

every other Ordinance, both in Publick and in Private, do not aim at and intend this great end, the begetting or actuating and ſtirring up the life of Religion in our Souls, then are they what ſome would fain perſwade us, vain, uſeleſs, troubleſome things. If thy coming to Church to hear a Prayer, or a Sermon, be not by thee deſigned, and do not in the event tend to make thee better, to love God more, loath ſin more, and value the world leſs, and reſolve more heartily to obey the Goſpel, thou hadſt as good have been in thy bed or ſhop as in the Church; and if in Preaching and Praying, we that are Gods mouth to you, and your mouth to God, have any other deſign than to ſtir up in your Souls good thoughts of God, affectionate workings of heart towards a loving tender-hearted Father, zealous and hungring deſires to do the will of God, and expreſs our love by obeying his Commandments, I ſeriouſly profeſs I ſhould think my ſelf much better imployed to be working in a Coblers-ſtall, or raking in the kennel, or filling a dung-cart, than preaching or praying in a pulpit; and let thoſe who do not intend theſe great ends know, that ere long they will find, they had better have been imployed in the moſt debaſing drudgery, than in the outward work of God with ſiniſter and unworthy ends.

Theſe things premiſed, the caſe reſolves it ſelf into theſe particular queſtions:

1. What ſhould believing Chriſtians do to ſupport the life of Religion in their ſouls, when they want the ordinary food of publick Goſpel-Ordinances?

2. What ſhould ſuch do to preſerve their outward concernments among perſecuting enemies, without hazarding their Religion?

In anſwer to the firſt queſtion take theſe Directions:

1. Let ſuch humbly reflect upon their former ſleighting, deſpiſing and abuſing the means of grace which now they want; it is the uſual method of God, to teach us the worth of Mercies either Temporal or Spiritual, by the want of them, and to bring us to want thoſe mercies which we abuſe; if the Child play with, or throw about his meat, he may well think a wiſe and loving Father will make him feel the want of it, and thereby know the worth of it; and certainly we have as much reaſon to fear the fulfilling of thoſe threatnings which the Miniſters of the Goſpel have for many years ſounded in our ears, for our abuſe of the means of grace; and certainly if Gods providence ſhould call the moſt of us into *Spain*, or ſome other Popiſh Country where we ſhould have *a famine of hearing the word of the Lord*, might we not ſadly reflect upon our deſpiſing, yea and loathing the heavenly Manna of Gods Word? I ſpeak not of the prophane ungodly wretches, who ſcarce ever had any ſerious thoughts of Eternity, nor ever ſoberly conſidered whether they were at all beholding unto God or no, that never knew how to value a Bible above a Play-book, or the Sacrament above a drunken meeting, whoſe Religion is to ſcoff and mock at godlineſs and godly men, and who ſcarce ever knew any other end in coming to Church, but to mock or carp at the Preacher, who may with trembling read their doom, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16.

But

But I speak of the Professors of Religion, how have they either by reason of new fangled opinions, sleighted and despised Gospel-Ordinances? or else by reason of fulness of spiritual food, have loathed and trampled upon the means of grace, to whom the Lord seems to speak, as to those *Ezek.* 34. 18, 19. *Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet*; or else having enjoyed them, and made use of them, have been little the better by them; have not lived and practised the Sermons they have heard, and the prayers that they have made: Oh let such be sure in the first place to give glory to God, when he deprives them of such means, by acknowledging his justice in taking away what hath been so much abused, or at best so little improved; then let them with broken and bleeding hearts reflect upon those full Banquets of spiritual dainties, the fragments of which in a time of want they would be glad of.

2. Heartily resolve, if ever the Lord bring you again to enjoy Gospel-Ordinances, you will more value, prize, and improve them; and indeed that alone which can make our repentings and sad reflections upon former miscarriages not to be mockings of God, and cozening our selves, must be an hearty resolution against what we profess to be sorry for; and therefore that our resolution in such a case may be the more fixed, it would be good to record it in our Note-books, that so it may be a continual Moniter on all occasions minding us of our duty, and checking us if afterwards we prove like the *Israelites*, who *soon forgat the Lord*. And the truth is, a Christians Note-book is usually a more faithful register than his heart, and 'tis easier for the devil to blot a good resolution out of our minds, than out of our books. Psal. 106. 13

3. Labour to know and understand well, and often remember, wherein consists the life of true and real Religion; there be so many things in the world that pretend to be Religion, and less deserve that name than the picture of a man deserves the name of a man, that 'tis an easie mistake to nourish an enemy to Religion instead of Religion, unless we be serious and wary, and more apt to regard the characters which the Scriptures give of real Religion, than hasty to take up the forms and fancies of men instead of Religion. I have read of a young *French* Lady, who observing the glorious pomp and splendour of a Popish Procession, cryed out, How fine a Religion is ours in comparison of the *Hugonots*? a speech suiting her age and quality; but indeed if Religion did consist in such things, the question I have in hand would fall to the ground, for there could then be no exercise of Religion among those who would not admit of such pompous solemnities. Let us therefore be often remembring, that the Religion of the Gospel consists in *righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*; in *denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and so looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; in *visiting* Rom. 14. 17. Tit. 2. 12. 13. Jam. 1. 27.

i. e.

the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping our selves unspotted from the world. He that hath a precious Jewel which he would secure, must be able to distinguish it well from a counterfeit stone, lest he neglect his Jewel, and spend his care and pains upon a glittering glass foysted into the room of it.

4. In all your actions be often fixing your eye upon your great end; be often asking your selves what is the work and business for which God sent me into the world? which lyes in three words: 1. Honour God. 2. Save your Souls. 3. Do good to others. Be often minding your selves that you have a better Trade to drive than for the corruptible riches of this world, even for the *pearl of great price*, the eternal happiness of your souls. Religion is the way to Heaven, and he that doth not often eye his journeys end, and consider, whether the way he takes do lead unto his end, is never like to keep long in the right way; but now he that often with seriousness considers with himself that the God who made him, expects to be honoured by him; that the securing his souls welfare is his grand concernment; and that to save the soul of one sinner is a greater good than to save a Countrey from drowning, or a City from burning; and therefore on all occasions asks himself, how may I manage such a business so as to honour God and promote the good of mine own and other mens souls? How may I prosecute such an affair without prejudicing the grand design of my life? This man is like to secure Religion in his soul.

5. Live up to the professed principles of your Religon; and believe it to be a greater glory to God, honour to your Religion, and security to your own souls to live according to, than to argue and dispute for your Religion; for most certain it is, that self-love, worldly interest, pride, passion, *&c.* may urge men to argue eagerly for the Christian or Protestant Religion, whereas nothing but love to God, and care of our own souls, and charity to the souls of others, can make a man live according to the Principles of that Religion; and as it is with the principle of natural life, it is not made more lively, active and vigorous by arguing and disputing wherein it doth consist, and what are the proper acts of it, but by putting it forth in the due acts and exercises of that life; even so the principle of spiritual life in the soul, gets no strength by zealous and hot disputing what and which is the true Religion, and which be true and proper acts of Religion, but by humble practise of what we know to be Religion; not but that it is both lawful and commendable to be able to understand and defend the grounds and principles of our Religion, and all the holy exercises of it, but I only caution against letting that sap run out in unfruitful suckers, which should nourish the fruit-bearing branches.

6. Be the more careful to observe and close with the inward stirrings of Gods Spirit in your hearts, moving you to prayer, meditation, *&c.* When you are in *a valley of vision*, you will have many calls and motions from without to hear the Word, and pray, and receive the Sacrament; but when you are abroad in a land of darkness, God must not only

only be your *beſt*, but your *only* friend, by his Spirit to jog and ſtir you up to holy duties; and therefore it doth more than ordinarily concern us, at ſuch a time, not to ſend away Gods Spirit grieved with our backwardneſs to that which is our own concernment.

7. Obſerve and keep a regiſter or diary of Gods mercies and your own ſins; that you may be often minded what God hath been to you, and what you have been to him; with how many thouſand kindneſſes he hath obliged you, and with how many thouſand ſins you have diſobliged him; When we enjoy publick Ordinances, we may there be often minded both of Gods goodneſs to us, and our ſinfulneſs againſt him; and ſo may have our hearts ſtirred up to have very good thoughts of God, and very low thoughts of our ſelves: but when we want publick Ordinances, we ſhould labour to ſupply that want by a more ſtrict obſervation, and recording both the one and the other; that by reviewing our regiſter we may be enabled to affect our ſouls ſutably, either to praiſe the Lord, or abaſe our ſelves.

8. Lay a charge upon your ſelves to ſleep and awake with the thoughts of God and eternity upon your ſouls; and indeed though this is exceeding uſeful for all men, yet moſt of all for thoſe who are deprived of Ordinances. 'Tis ſure that the ſame truths which at firſt work upon the ſoul to the begetting grace, are of force afterwards to quicken grace, and make it lively and vigorous in the ſoul; and certainly the belief of what God is in himſelf and to us, and the thoughts of eternity, have a great force to perſwade careleſs ſinners to ſober and ſerious conſideration, the neceſſary inſtrument by which grace and a ſpirit of true and real Religion is begot in the ſoul; and therefore when we want thoſe publick Ordinances which might be often preſenting theſe great truths to our ſouls, it will be of great uſe to charge our ſelves more ſeverely with the daily ſerious thoughts of them.

9. Take heed (as for your life) of indulging any ſecret ſin; for that will keep down the life of Religion in the midſt of all Ordinances, and therefore much more in the want of them; a ſecret diſeaſe in the body which ſpends upon the ſtock of the radical moyſture, will keep a man from being lively and vigorous, though he have plenty of very good nouriſhing food, much more will it endanger one in a famine; even ſo a ſecret ſin lodged within, and indulged, will weaken and enervate the principle of Religion in the ſoul amidſt the fulleſt proviſion of Goſpel-Ordinances, much more when there is a famine or ſcarcity of the bread of life. A Tradeſman that hath ſome ſecret vent where his eſtate runs waſte, may prove a beggar in the midſt of daily incomes by a good Trade, much more if he ſpends upon a dead ſtock; and ſo a man who ſpends the ſtrength of his ſoul in ſome cloſe and ſecret ſin, may prove a ſpiritual beggar in the fulleſt Trade of Goſpel-Ordinances; and though he have daily incomes of convictions, informations, reproofs, counſels, ſollicitations, &c. from publick Ordinances, much more in the want of them; and therefore they who value the life of Religion, or the life of their ſouls, muſt take heed of indulging ſecret ſins.

10. Be

10. Be the more careful often to feel the pulſe of thine own ſoul; we uſe to ſay, every man at a competent age is either a fool or a Phyſician, and though he be a fool indeed, who when he needs and may have wiſer Phyſicians, will truſt to himſelf; yet when he cannot have others, a man ſhould the more ſtudy himſelf, and the oftner try his own pulſe; and truly he is but a babe in ſpiritual things that is not ſomething of a Phyſician to himſelf; and though we ſhould not truſt our own skill or experience, where we need and may have the help of others; yet when we are deprived of them, we ſhould the more diligently converſe with our own ſouls, and be the oftner trying how our pulſe beats towards God, and Heaven, and the things of another life.

11. Be ſo much the more in private ſecret prayer, reading, and meditation; when we want the ſhowrs of publick Ordinances, we ſhould the more diligently uſe the watring pot, and water our ſouls *with our foot* (as the phraſe is concerning *Ægypt*) Deut. 11. 10. If our lot ſhould be caſt where there be no publick Markets where Corn might be bought, every one would plow and ſow, reap and thraſh in his own grounds: Even ſo, if we ſhould live where there be no publick Goſpel-Ordinances, where the Truths of the Goſpel are not publickly to be had, where we connot partake of the labours of the Goſpel-Miniſtry, then it would concern us to be the more diligent in plowing and ſowing, in reaping and thraſhing by our own private endeavours; and I think it would be fit for us in ſuch a condition, to ſpend that time at leaſt in private duties, which others ſpend in ſuperſtitious or Idolatrous ſervices; let not us think much to give God and our ſouls that time, which others give to their own ſuperſtitious fancies.

12. In the uſe of all private helps, act faith in God, as being able to ſupply the want of outward means by the gracious influence of his good and holy Spirit. When there was no rain from heaven, God could cauſe a miſt to ariſe and water the earth, *Gen.* 2. 6. even ſo if the Lord ſhould bring us where there be no ſhowres of publick Ordinances, he can ſtir up in our ſouls thoſe holy and heavenly meditations, which ſhall again drop down like an heavenly dew upon the face of our ſouls, and keep up an holy verdure and freſhneſs upon the face of our ſouls. *Ægypt* is ſaid to have no rain, but God makes it fruitful by the overflowing of its own River *Nilus*; and truly if God bring any true believer into a ſpiritual *Ægypt*, where the rain of publick Ordinances doth not fall, he can cauſe ſuch a flow of holy and heavenly thoughts and meditations as ſhall make the ſoul very fruitful in a good and an holy life; and therefore we ſhould oft in ſuch a condition believingly remember, that if we do our endeavour, by private prayer, meditation, reading, and ſuch like, God is able and will, in the want of publick Ordinances, preſerve the life of Religion in our ſouls, by private helps.

Terra non indiga Jovis.

We proceed now to the ſecond Queſtion contained in the general caſe, *viz.*

Queſt. What ſhould believing Chriſtians do to preſerve their outward concernments among perſecuting enemies, without hazarding their Religion?

Now

Now this queſtion will reſolve it ſelf into two particular Queries.

1. What ſhould ſuch do to ſecure themſelves from ſuffering?

2. What ſhould they do to encourage themſelves againſt, and ſupport in ſufferings. The ſumme of what may be ſaid to the firſt Query, I ſuppoſe to be comprized in that counſel of our Lord Jeſus, who was Wiſdom it ſelf, and Innocency it ſelf, *Matth.* 10. 16, *Behold I ſend you forth as ſheep in the midſt of Wolves, be ye therefore wiſe as Serpents, and harmleſs as Doves*; the Serpents wiſdom joyned with the Doves innocency, are the true Chriſtians beſt ſecurity; to each of which I ſhall ſpeak ſomething.

1. Get ſpiritual Prudence and Wiſdom to ſecure from ſuffering where we have not a clear and ſufficient call. The Heathens hinted wiſdom as well as ſtrength to be needful for a Souldier, when they appointed the Warlike Goddeſs *Pallas* to be the Patroneſs of Wiſdom: a Souldier may and ought to guard himſelf, and by winding and turning his body, avoid the enemies blow, ſo long as he doth not turn his back, forſake the field, or betray his truſt; in like manner may a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt, by any lawful means guard himſelf from ſuffering; and by any juſt compliance, or ſtepping aſide, or giving back, avoid a blow, or make a fair retreat, ſo long as he keeps the Field, and doth not turn his back upon, nor give up a good and a juſt cauſe for fear of ſuffering. Hence the Apoſtle adviſeth, *Col.* 4. 5, *Walk in wiſdom toward them that are without*; that is, walk as thoſe that have wiſely fixt upon a good end, and do uſe the moſt proper and likely means to attain that end. Now this general direction will branch it ſelf forth into theſe particulars:

1. Do not raſhly and unneceſſarily provoke thoſe that have power to do you a miſchief; it is not wiſdom to ſtir in a waſps neſt, nor by bloody colours to provoke a wilde Bull; and certainly our life, and the comforts and relations in this world, are ſuch real and great bleſſings, that they are not to be ſacrificed to an humour, nor caſt away, but upon the moſt ſerious conſideration, and real neceſſity; and certainly when our Lord Jeſus directed his Diſciples, if perſecuted in one *City*, to flie to another, he never intended they ſhould throw themſelves into the jaws of roaring Lions, nor provoke Bears and Tygers to tear them in pieces, nor leave the quiet habitation of *Sion* to ſeek perſecution and court a Martyrdome among Pagans and Infidels. The holy Apoſtle *Paul*, who was as willing to die for the Name of Chriſt as any, and was therefore by his love and zeal urged to go into the Theater at *Epheſus*, yet he took the Prudent counſel and advice of his Friends, not to venture himſelf, nor by his preſence provoke the enraged multitude, *Acts* 19. 31. and afterward he made uſe of his Kinſmans help to ſecure his life from thoſe who had bound themſelves with an oath to kill him, *Act.* 23. 16. and at laſt appeals to *Cæſar* to avoid the miſchief deſigned againſt him by the *Jews*, *Act.* 25. 10. This piece of ſpiritual prudence cauſed the primitive Chriſtians to abſtain from prophaning the Temples of the heathen, and reviling their gods; and therefore they choſe to diſcover to them the vanity of their Idolatries from the Writings and Records of their Act. 21. 13.

own Prophets, and with the greateſt love and ſweetneſs that could be; yea this was ſo evident in *Paul* himſelf, that the Town Clerk of *Epheſus* was able to be his, and his fellow-Chriſtians Compurgator in this matter, *Act.* 19. 37, *Ye have brought hither theſe men which are neither robbers of Churches* (or as the original ἱεροσύλους *ſacrilegious perſons*) *nor yet blaſphemers of your Goddeſs:* and therefore that which *Joſephus* accounts one of *Moſes* Laws, *that none ſhould blaſpheme the Religion of another*, though it be not a general duty (as appears by *Elijahs* mocking and ſcoffing at the God and Religion of *Baals* Prieſts, 1 *King.* 18. 27.) yet it holds good here as a rule of prudence, to avoid needleſs provoking of thoſe that are without. And in this caſe I take this to be a ſure rule, whatever act of ours hath rationally a greater likelihood to provoke, harden and enrage the hearts of men, rather than to convince and convert, is a fruit of indiſcretion, not of Chriſtian prudence; a piece of folly, not a part of our duty. It was certainly a favour from God when he inclined the heart of *Trajan* to order his Proconſul *Plinius Secundus*, deſiring to know his pleaſure in the caſe, that when any were brought before him, and accuſed to be Chriſtians, he ſhould puniſh them according to Law, but ſhould not induſtriouſly ſearch them out; if now any ſhould have ruſhed into the Judges preſence, and taken the Devils work out of his hand (who is the accuſer of the Brethren) it would ſurely have been a ſinful undervaluing the favour of God in that relaxation of their perſecution. But now this advice muſt be bounded with a word of caution: for as we ſhould take heed leſt our zeal degenerate into ambition, and fooliſh vain-glory in ſuffering: ſo on the other ſide, leſt our prudence and Chriſtian wiſdom turn to ſinful craft and policy, while to avoid the ſtroak of perſecution, we take up the Devils buckler of unlawful practiſes. The Apoſtle *Peter* was not bound to go into the high Prieſts hall, and proclaim himſelf a Diſciple of Jeſus, but he was obliged not to deny and forſwear it when challenged with it; and ſo though I am not alway bound to proclaim my faith and Religion, yet am I engaged never to diſown it; and therefore we muſt take heed of that which *Elihu* charged *Job* with, *Job* 36. 21. the chooſing *iniquity rather then affliction*; and therefore when fear or covetouſneſs would urge us to ſin, rather than ſuffer, let us remember, againſt our fears, that 'tis a more fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, than dying men, *Iſa.* 51. 12. and againſt our earthly deſires, let us remember, that if we gain the whole world, and loſe our own ſouls, we ſhall be incomparable loſers by the bargain, *Matth.* 16. 26. On the other ſide, when ambition, vain-glory or humour, would urge us to unneceſſary ſufferings, let us remember, that God who is Wiſdom it ſelf, *hath no pleaſure in fools*, Eccl. 5. 4. nor delights in thoſe ſacrifices which are not preſented to him by prudent conſideration and ſober reſolution, but by the folly of a precipitate zeal; and however where the heart is right and full of love, God may except of the love, and pardon the weakneſs, yet he no way delights in the ſufferings which men bring upon themſelves unneceſſarily, by raſh, imprudent carraige, whereby they betray their lives and liberties to the luſts and rage of men, and draw on their

Plin. See Ep. l. 10. conquirendi non ſunt, ſi de fecantur & arguantur, puniendi ſunt.

their enemies to blood and cruelty, and upbraid the wiſdom of thoſe who are not ſo raſh, as being leſs real to God and Chriſt, and make others have hard thoughts of that Religion which cannot conſiſt with prudence and wiſdome.

2. Be much in the exerciſe of thoſe acts of true Religion which are beautiful in the eyes of all, even the worſt of men; the Apoſtle *Peter* intimates the ſecurity of an evidently good and holy life, 1 *Pet.* 3. 13, *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* the cheif pieces of Chriſtian Religion are ſuch as Papiſts, Turks and Infidels muſt needs acknowledge to be good; *To viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction*; *To wrong no man*; *To do to others whatever we would that others ſhould do to us*: Now when we cannot without danger exerciſe ſome other (perhaps more queſtionable) parts of Chriſtian Religion, then 'tis good to be ſo much the more in the practice of theſe undoubted pieces of a Chriſtian life; and zeal in theſe things will force thoſe without to approve; whereas zeal in arguing for, or in practiſing other things, may cauſe them to hate and perſecute us; zeal in arguing and diſputing, brings on evil words and evil actions; but zeal in the practice of unqueſtionable duties, produceth good deeds in our ſelves, and forceth goods thoughts and good words, if not good deeds from others. In a word, hot diſputing, and cold living; or zeal in ſmaller, and luke-warmneſs in greater matters, is the ruine of grace in our ſelves, the confirming of ſin in others, and the needleſs hazarding our outward concernments, and betraying them raſhly to the violence of wicked and ungodly men.

3. In your converſe with thoſe who are without, chuſe moſtly to inſiſt upon common and acknowledged principles, rather than controverted points; if I were to live among, and converſe with Papiſts, I would chuſe much rather to urge them to abſtain from lying, drunkenneſs, malice, *&c.* and to have good thoughts of God, to have a continual ſenſe of their dependance upon him, and therefore continually to recommend themſelves unto him by holy prayer, to be meek, and patient, and charitable, rather than to diſpute how many Sacraments there be, or how the bread and the wine is the body and blood of Chriſt; for good counſel, and ſober exhortations ſpeak love to mens ſouls, whereas diſputes and arguings are uſually thought to proceed only from love to our own notions, and a deſire to oppoſe others; and indeed if men did not place too much of their Religion in oppoſing others, they might much more ſafely, and much more profitably converſe with thoſe of different opinions, yea of different Religions.

4. When you do touch upon controverted points, rather enquire and propound, than poſitively aſſert, and violently oppoſe; though I judge the Maſs of *Rome*, as by them uſed, to be a piece of as groſs Idolatry, as the world can ſhew; yet were I to converſe among Papiſts, I would not fall foul upon them as the groſſeſt Idolaters; but as more deſiring truth ſhould be honoured, than they reproached, I would calmly and meekly propound my reaſons as grounds of doubting, rather than clear demon-

ſtrations; for ſure it is, that a ſudden and violent aſſault, will cauſe an adverſary to gather up his ſtrength as violently to oppoſe; whereas a calm propounding of reaſons, or doubts, may work him to a ſerious conſideration, which is the firſt ſtep to the diſcovery of error, and acknowledging of truth; for the one kindles a deſire of knowing; the other, a deſire of oppoſing, yea of perſecuting.

5. When you think your ſelves bound to reprove the ſins of others, let it be done with a due conſideration of the circumſtances of time, place and perſons; and indeed there's ſcarce any part of a Chriſtians converſe with others, that more requires prudence and wiſdom, than that of reproving others; and great care is to be had that a reproof may at the leaſt be well taken, if not hearkened to, and that it may do the reprover no hurt, if it do the reproved no good.

6. On all occaſions expreſs a willingneſs to do for the beſt; to believe as others believe, and to do as others do, if you could ſee ſufficient ground and reaſon for it: and indeed this may be a great help and ſecurity, for obſtinacy is uſually made one eſſential part of an Heretick; and then, he that is heartily willing to cloſe with every revealed truth, may be in an error, but cannot be an Heretick; and therefore every expreſſion of a mind not obſtinately bent upon its taken-up notions, nor doting upon its own conceptions, but inricht with an ingenuous freedom to acknowledge its miſtakes, and own truth when once clearly diſcovered, though formerly diſowned, is like ſo much water upon the fire of rage kindled in the hearts of perſecuting enemies, to quench or abate it: for to the reaſon of any that will but conſider, it cannot but appear moſt unreaſonable to urge a perſon to believe what he cannot ſee any ground for, or to do what he would be willing to do, if it were not ſin, that is, a provoking God, and hazarding his own eternal welfare.

7. Be ſure to uſe no means to ſecure from perſecution, or procure the enjoyment of publick Ordinances, but ſuch as are well-pleaſing to a good, and a holy God; 'tis not long ſince it was the peculiar honour of the Popiſh Faction, to depoſe or murder Kings, blow up Parliaments, ſubvert States and Kingdoms, to procure their liberty, or ſecure themſelves from ſuffering: and if any other have ventured upon ſuch practices, I hope God hath taught them by his providence, what they would not learn from his word, that affliction is rather to be choſen than ſin, and that 'tis better to wait upon him in the way of his Judgments (that is, in a way of duty) than to out-run God, and think to ſecure our ſelves by ſinful and unjuſtifiable courſes. Let thoſe therefore who profeſs to believe that their God is a God hearing prayer, and that bottles up the tears of of his people, and is able to do what he pleaſeth, let them account prayers and tears their beſt arms, ſeeing they call in that God whoſe power extends as far as his will.

8. Arm your ſelves with a ſevere patience and a ſteady reſolution to bear leſſer affronts and injuries; thoſe Chriſtians were in ſuch a condition as we are now ſpeaking of, whom the Apoſtle minds, that they had *need of patience*, *Heb.* 10. 36. Let it be our wiſdom therefore to get a ſtock of

that

that which will be ſo needfull for us; patience is alway a part of our duty, but in this caſe it is alſo an inſtance of our prudence; for he is a fool that will hazard the beating out of his brains, rather than bear a fillip.

9. Be much in prayer to that God who alone can ſecure from ſuffering, fit for ſuffering, ſtrengthen under, and infinitely reward after we have ſuffered.

2. Let the Serpents wiſdome be ſeconded with the Doves harmleſneſs and innocency; walk ſo honeſtly, and inoffenſively, that wicked men may be put hard to it, to find an occaſion to quarrel or wrong you; this was remarkable in *Daniel*, as you may ſee *Chap.* 6. 4. this was the Apoſtles direction, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 12, *Walk honeſtly toward thoſe that are without*; and it was according to his practice, *Act.* 24. 16, *And herein do I exerciſe my ſelf, to have always a conſcience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Now this Chriſtian innocency or ſimplicity ought to be like a thred, to run through the whole courſe of our converſe with others; we ſhould neither injure the perſon, good name, eſtate, friend, or any thing which another may call his; if the Lamb among Wolves and Foxes begin to butt and contend, no wonder if theſe ſoon bite and devour; we ſhould be ſo honeſt and plain-hearted in our Promiſes, Contracts, Covenants, and dealings with others, that they may reverence our Religion as teaching us to do the beſt things, and ſuffer the worſt; and not hate our Religion, as being only a deſign to make us the better able to deceive and injure others. 'Twould be no ſmall part of our ſecurity, if our carriage towards others might ſpeak for us that which the Poet makes *Achilles* ſpeak concerning himſelf, and his Tutor *Chiron*, *Jeſus Chriſt is my Teacher, and he hath learnt me to uſe ſimplicity and honeſty in all my manners.* But now if neither of theſe two will ſecure us from ſuffering, but Gods providence doth call us to a publick owning of him, and the Religion of the Goſpel, we muſt then joyn the Lyons courage to the wiſdom of the Serpent, and the innocency of the Dove, that we may he imboldned to look the greateſt danger in the face, rather than turn our back upon God and Chriſt, and the Religion of the Goſpel. And this brings me to the ſecond branch of the latter part of the Caſe, How ſhould believers encourage themſelves againſt ſufferings?

In anſwer to which take theſe briefe Directions:

1. Be often remembring how infinitely more worth the ſoul is than the body; be often weighing in the ſcales of ſober and ſerious conſideration, a *precious ſoul* againſt a *vile body*; and then minde thy ſelf, that the worſt which perſecuting enemies can do, is to deſtroy a corruptible body; but the worſt which God can do, is to deſtroy thine immortal ſoul: Chriſt arms his Diſciples againſt fear of ſuffering, by this conſideration, *Matth.* 10. 28, *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul: but rather fear him which is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell.* Luke. 16. 26. Phil. 3. 21.

2. Think how inconſiderable Time is, compared with Eternity; ſpend your thoughts upon the difference vaſt and inconceiveable, between thoſe two; the Apoſtle tells us, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy*

worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us, Rom. 8. 18. The Apoſtle compares himſelf to one that hath been caſting up an account, where on one ſide he meets with nothing but cyphers, or ſmall petty ſummes; but on the other ſide findes thouſands and millions, and then cryes out, alas, the one is not to be compared with the other! thus the Apoſtle findes *light and momentany afflictions* on the one ſide, and *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory* on the other ſide, as we find him expreſſing himſelf, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17.

3. Remember that the welfare of the body doth depend upon the welfare of the ſoul; not indeed in this world, for here his body may be well, and in good plight, fat and flouriſhing, well fed and cloathed, whoſe ſoul is poor and naked, ſick and wounded, in a ſad and deplorable condition; and one the other ſide, a poor beggarly ſick *Lazarus*, may have a ſoul fed with Royal and heavenly Dainties, and cloathed with better Robes than Purple and Ermine; but then the eternal welfare of the body depends upon the eternal welfare of the ſoul; 'tis bound up in the life and welfare of the ſoul, as *Jacobs* life is ſaid to be bound up in *Benjamins*, Gen. 44. 30. and therefore you cannot ſecure the welfare of the outward man, by betraying and caſting away that which is the life and welfare of the inward man.

4. Remember that you can ſuffer nothing in this world, but Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuffered the ſame, or worſe; The Lord Jeſus arms his Diſciples againſt ſufferings by this conſideration, *John.* 15. 20. and the Apoſtle *Paul* having experienced it himſelf, adviſeth the believing *Hebrews* to it, *Heb.* 12. 1, 2, 3. *Looking unto Jeſus, &c.* Now this conſideration will ſuggeſt to us,

1. That the woiſt ſufferings are no diſhnour to us, ſeeing Chriſt Jeſus the King of Kings hath born them.

2. That the greateſt ſufferings do not ſpeak us the greateſt ſinners; Chriſts ſufferings aſſure us, that the pureſt and whiteſt innocency may be dyed red in its own blood.

3. That the greateſt ſufferings make us never the leſs amiable in the eyes of God; for then Chriſt Jeſus the only begotten Son of God, in whom he was always well-pleaſed, would not have ſuffered.

4. We can ſuffer nothing but what our God, our Friend, our Father, knows we ſuffer, and knows that a ſuffering condition is the beſt for us. When poor Chriſtians are kept by the bloody Inquiſition in dark Holes and Caves from the eyes of all the world, they cannot be kept from the eye of God, *Rev.* 2. 13, *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satans ſeat is*; this was the encouragement which Chriſt gave his perſecuted Church of *Pergamus*; Thy condition is known to that God whoſe heart is as tender as his eye piercing, and whoſe arm can reach as far as his eye, and whoſe wiſdom knows how to direct the ſufferings of every believer for his own, his Churches, and that believers realgood.

5. Be often comparing God and creatures together; that great God who ſuffers in, and with his ſuffering people, and thoſe little ſmall things called

called devils and men that bring ſufferings upon them; make thy ſoul to know and underſtand the difference between the little trifling bubble-promiſes of the world, and the great, precious, ſolid and maſſie promiſes of God; and let faith tell thee, that the threatnings of a raging Devil, a ſtorming *Nebuchadnezzar*, or a furious multitude, are but the noiſe of a Pot-gun, if compared with the thunder of Gods dreadful Threatnings. Remember what God ſaith to his afflicted Church, *Iſa.* 51. 12, *Who art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a man that ſhall dye, and of the ſon of man which ſhall be made as graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker, &c?* In a word, think thus with thy ſelf, Man cannot do all that he ſeems able to do, nor all that he reſolves and boaſts that he will do; but God can do all that he hath ſaid he will do, and he will do for his ſuffering ſervants more than they can hope or think. Let us heartily believe that God can eaſily recompence us for whatever we may loſe for him; but all the creatures in the world are not able to make amends for that which Apoſtacy from God will deprive us of, Oh Sirs, could we but heartily believe this, what a ſorry temptation would perſecution be? If this faith were ſtrong, perſecution would be exceeding weak: If faith could ſee men and devils able to do nothing, and God able to do all things, then perſecution would be able to do nothing; and ſuch a faith would be able to do and to ſuffer all things.

And thus I have ſpoken to both the parts of this practical Caſe of Conſcience, and ſhall now cloſe up all with a word of Exhortation, That if it be ſuch a real ground of trouble, *&c.* then let us make it our earneſt prayer to God, that our Land may ſtill be a *Goſhen* and a *Valley of Viſion*, and not an *Ægypt*, or the *vale of the ſhadow of death*: that we may ſtill enjoy the ordinances of the Goſpel, and the company and ſociety of good men; that our lot may never fall among *Ezekiels* Scorpions, or pricking briars, and grieving thorns, *Ezek.* 2. 6. and 28. 24. Let us heartily pray for that bleſſedneſs mentioned, *Pſalm* 65. 4, *That the Lord may chuſe us, and cauſe us to approach unto him, that we may dwell in his Courts, and be ſatisfied with the goodneſs of his houſe.*

How

How is Hypocriſie diſcoverable and Curable?

Luke XII. 1.

Firſt of all, Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is Hypocriſie.

WHen our Lord and Saviour had finiſht his heavenly ſoul-ſearching Sermon in the Chapter foregoing, he came ſo cloſe in the application to the Scribes and Phariſees, a proud hypocritical people, that they (not able to indure their pride and hypocriſie ſhould be ſo ſoundly convinced and openly detected) combined and contrived (by urging, and watching, and catching words) to accuſe him and ſtop his mouth at leaſt, if not his breath. Theſe contrivances and practiſes of theirs, were not unknown to him that knew all things; and what effect it wrought in Chriſt, you find in this verſe of the Text; he preached the ſame things, and in the ſame manner and ſharpneſs of ſtile at the next opportunity.

Luk 11.53,54.

John 21. 17.

In the mean time, ἐν οἷς, ſaith the greek: in *thoſe*, or in *which* times that they *were* thus plotting and contriving, Chriſt is boldly preaching the ſame Doctrine that they were perſecuting, was as bold for the truth as they were politick againſt it.

And in thoſe very days, and in the midſt of theſe contrivements againſt his preaching, the people as much loved the Doctrine that the Phariſees perſecuted: an innumerable multitude were gathered together to ſee and hear him. A *myriade*, too many thouſands to be eaſily numbred, flocked and thronged ſo to him, that they even trode one upon another; and then he began to ſay to his Diſciples (they were neareſt to him, but ſo as the people heard it) and he taught them; and that was his intent, as you may ſee *verſ.* 40. 42.

Firſt of all, Beware of, for the adverb is not to be joyned to the verb *taught*, but to the word *beware*, i. e. πρῶτον, *firſt of all* is not uſed *diſtributively*

Rom. 1. 8.

butively, but *eminently*; as much as to ſay *chiefly*, eſpecially *beware*, &c. ſo it is uſed by the Apoſtle, *Firſt I thank my God for you all*, (that is chiefly) *that your faith is ſpoken of through the world.* Rom. 1. 8.

Beware and avoid this *leaven* of hypocriſie wherewith the Phariſees doctrine and converſation is ſo leavened; take heed, beware eſpecially, chiefly of *hypocriſie*.

In the Text is repreſented a precious Sermon in its preaching, with the circumſtances of it.

Wherein is obſervable,

1. The time, it was in that juncture of time when they had counſelled and determined, but had not yet executed their counſels.

2. The Preacher, Chriſt himſelf the great Prophet of the Church, in the exerciſe of his Prophetical Office.

3. The Auditors, his Diſciples and innumerable multitude of people.

4. His firſt Doctrine is, *Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees.* And this Doctrine is confirmed by Reaſon, *verſ.* 2. and improved by inference, *verſ.* 3.

Many uſeful leſſons might be commended from the other particulars, but my meditations are confined to the laſt, the Doctrine, the caution, *Beware of the leaven*, &c. and only ſpend as much time in opening the Text and Doctrine, as will let me in to give direction, *how to diſcern, and how to be delivered from this dangerous leaven of hypocriſie:* which is according to your deſires unto me for your inſtruction in this particular.

The words naturally yield you this Doctrine,

Hypocriſie is a dangerous leaven, which Miniſters and people are chiefly and eſpecially to beware of, and acquit themſelves from. Hence you have a Chapter of woes againſt it. *Doctr.* Matth. 23.

And it is repreſented, as that which renders odious to the Lord, and defiles his choiceſt Ordinances, and our beſt duties, if it cleave to them. Iſa. 1. 11, 12. Iſa. 66. 3.

And puts God to ſad complaints and exprobations of ſuch a people: *What ſhall I do unto thee, O Judah? What ſhall I do unto thee, O Ephraim? for your righteouſneſs is as a morning-cloud:* all ſhew, no truth, no ſhowers. Hoſ. 6. 4.

And hath been the ruin of many forward and glorious profeſſors, as *Balaam, Jehu, Saul*, and many other perſons of great parts, and many great performances, and one would conceive of great hopes too: but they and their works, and their hopes all are periſhed, *the hypocrites hope ſhall periſh.* Job 8. 13.

The Explication of this Doctrine would lye in the ſpeaking to theſe particulars:

1. What *hypocriſie is.*
2. How is it reſembled by *leaven.*
3. Why called the leaven of the *Phariſees.*
4. Wherein is it ſo *dangerous.*

1. What *hypocriſie* is: Much of the nature of a thing is many times diſcovered in its name; the name is a brief deſcription.

The word *Hypocrite* properly ſignifies an *actor*, or *ſtage player*, a perſonater of other men in their ſpeech, habit, and action. The *Hebrew* word ſignifieth both a *wicked* man and a *deceiver*. And it is obſerved, that thoſe whom *David* the devouteſt man called *wicked*, *Solomon* the wiſeſt man calls *fools*, and *Job* the moſt upright man calls *hypocrites*: all is but one and the ſame thing under divers names.

Hypocriſie then is but a feigning vertue and piety it ſeems to put on, and vice and impiety it conceals and would ſeem to put off. It is indeed *vice in a vizor*: the face is vice, but virtue is the vizor. The *form* and nature of it is *imitation*: the ends are *vain glory*, to be ſeen of men, or ſome *gain* or *carnal* reſpects.

There is a *groſs* hypocriſie whereby men pretend to the good they *know* they have not: and there is a formal *cloſe* hypocriſie, whereby men deceive others and themſelves too; are hypocrites and do *not know it*: In this caſe it is probable the *Phariſee* was, and thoſe ſignified by the *five fooliſh Virgins*, and all *formal* Chriſtians that are not regenerated by the ſpirit, nor put into Chriſt by faith.

Luk. 18. Mat. 25.

This is a ſubtle evil, a ſecret poyſon, a cloſe contagion; and here it is infinite mercy and grace that we do not all ſplit and periſh; and if we can eſcape this, if we are indeed ſincere, we are out of the greateſt danger of all, the leaven of hypocriſie. To direct you to find out, and to purge out this, ſhall be my eſpecial endeavour at this time.

2. How is hypocriſie reſembled by *leaven*? Briefly thus:

1. Leaven is hardly diſcerned from good dough by the ſight, and as hardly is hypocriſie diſtinguiſhed from piety: *You outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within you are full of hypocriſie and iniquity.*

Mat. 23. 18. 1 Cor. 5. 6.

2. Leaven is very ſpreading: *a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: and ſo it is a great deal of miſchief hypocriſie doth, it ſpreads over all the man, and all his duties, parts, performances, leavens all, as we may obſerve, *Iſa.* 1. 12, 13, 14, 15. *Iſa.* 66. 3.

3. Leaven is of a ſower taſte, and ingrateful ſmell; ſo is hypocriſie to God and man, *I will ſpread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your ſolemn aſſemblies*: all were *leavened* with hypocriſie, and were accounted and ſavoured but as *dung* in the noſtrils of the Lord. How odious and loathſome was that ſervice of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, both to the Holy Ghoſt and to the Church, becauſe it was leavened with hypocriſie?

Mal. 2. 3. Act. 5.

4. Leaven is of a ſwelling nature, it extends and puffs up the dough: and ſo doth hypocriſie; it is all for the *praiſe of men*: the Scribes and Phariſees were all for preheminence, chief places, chief ſeats, chief appellations, to be called *Rabbi*, *Rabbi*: and if others will not admire and overvalue them, they will admire and advance themſelves: *I am not as this Publican. You are they that juſtifie your ſelves, but God knoweth your heart, for that which is highly eſteemed among men, is an abomination to the Lord.* They highly eſteemed of themſelves, they juſtified themſelves: they derided Chriſt for not having the ſame thoughts of them: Pride and vainglory is the inſeparable companion, if not the mother of hypocriſie.

Matth. 18. Luk. 16. 14, 15.

3. Why is it called the Leaven of the *Phariſees*? Becauſe they were leavened

leavened with it to purpoſe, they were exact and ſupereminent in this devliliſh art of perſonating and counterfeiting to the life. The Devil indeed is the arch-hypocrite of the world, *transforming himſelf into an Angel of light:* his firſt-born in this generation are the Scribes and Phariſees; his next born the *Jeſuits*, ſo like their predeceſſors the Phariſees, that a man may believe that Chriſt looked ſo far as to them in *Mat.*23. and ſtruck at them through the Phariſees ſides; that they were indeed the types; but the Pope, Cardinals, Prelates and Jeſuits, the antitype. Their Doctrines are alike leavened, they both ſet up traditions, ſuperſtitious cuſtoms and forms, againſt and above the Word of God, when once they come in competition: they both would ordinarily ſuſpend and diſpenſe with Gods commands, but moſt rigorouſly impoſe their own, and that under ſevere penalties: and both upon the account of extraordinary holineſs, and high actings of devotion. And ſo for their converſation, there was groſs hypocriſie in all to be ſeen; prayed in corners of the ſtreets, gave alms openly, disfigured themſelves that they might appear to faſt. So the *Jeſuits* (if we may believe ſome of themſelves being converted, and many of the *Seculars* that know them well enough) affect the name, but hate the reality of true piety and devotion. They would be accounted as *Henry* the fourth of *France* ſaid of them, *Timothies* at home in the Colledg, *Chryſoſtomes* in the pulpit, and *Auguſtines* in diſputation, this they would be accounted. Though it be *nomen inane & crimen immane*, they would have the name though not the thing; for that is the nature of the leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie. Mat. 6. 4. 5, 6.

4. Wherein is this leaven of hypocriſie ſo dangerous, that Miniſters and people ought firſtly, chiefly to beware of it? A very little, and briefly of that.

There is great danger *of* it, and great danger *by* it.

There is great danger *of* it: 1. For we have the ground of the matter in our ſelves, *hearts deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked; who can know* thy wickedneſs? *I the Lord ſearch the heart, and try the reins*, &c. As if none beſides the Lord knew the bottomleſs depths and deceits of the heart. In the heart are thoſe luſts and affections, that feed and foment all the hypocriſie in the world: pride, vain-glory, concupiſcence, carnal wiſdom; were it not for theſe, there would not be an hypocrite living. Jer. 17. 9.

2. The Devil watcheth night and day to ſet fire to this tower: he is fitted to the purpoſe, and filled with raging deſire to comply with a filthy heart, and to ingender this ſpurious off-ſpring of hypocriſie. He hath in readineſs his wiles, and his depths, his baits, and his ſnares; and for a falſe heart, hath falſe ways, falſe Doctrines, falſe faith, falſe ſeaſons, falſe ends and aims, *vix caret effectu*, when two ſuch be agreed to ſuch a purpoſe, hardly will they be fruſtrated.

3. And that we may not be ſecure, there are before our eyes and in our view dreadful examples: *Balaam* a great Prophet, *Judas* an Apoſtle familiar with Chriſt: *Saul*, *Jehu*, *Herod*, and *Agrippa*, famous Kings: *Five Virgins* conſpicuous and moſt confident: *Ananias* and *Saphira* eminent Converts: *Alexander* and *Demas* Confeſſors, and in ſome degree

Martyrs: it may grieve and make a tender heart tremble, to think what they became, and what is become of them; To teach him that ſtandeth to take heed leſt he fall, and all of us to our dying day, to *beware of the leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

2. And there is great danger *by* it: 1. The loſs of all that is done: Mat. 19. Chriſt will ſay as to that young man, *yet thou wanteſt one thing*, ſincerity: wouldſt thou have Heaven too? why then didſt thou all things for *the praiſe of men? thou haſt thy reward*, and art over-paid: *depart from me you* Mat. 7. 23. *that work iniquity.* 2. Fruſtrating of hopes, great hopes, hopes of glory Job 8. 13. and Heaven, and eſcaping eternal miſery, all theſe hopes muſt *periſh* to the *hypocrite:* periſh like a ſhip at the very mouth of the haven, periſh whiles they are crying, *Lord, Lord:* periſh into everlaſting horrour, and eternal diſpair.

3. Full detection, and manifeſting of them in the ſight and face of all Luk. 12. 2. the world: for *there is nothing covered that ſhall not be revealed, nor hid that ſhall not be known:* the vizor will be then taken off, which was feigned ſanctity; and the face will appear, which was indeed double iniquity; and for going about to cozen God, and the world, and his own ſoul, the miſerable hypocrite will be left to eternal, intollerable confuſion. To be deteſted, and derided by God, Angels and Saints; to be inſulted on by the Devils and damned to all eternity.

Luk. 12. 47. 4. And in Hell the hypocrite *ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes; for he knew his Maſters will,* and pretended he was doing of it, and yet *did it not.* Shall he that judged others to Hell, lie lower in Hell, and have more of Hell than Mat. 24. 51. thoſe condemned by him? ſhall it be worſe with a proud Phariſee than with a Publican, nay a damned Publican? is Hell the portion of Hypocrites? are they the free-holders, and all others but tenants and inmates with them? or elſe if there be a worſe place in Hell, muſt it be theirs? it muſt be ſo, for the nearer Heaven the more of Hell, and that will be the Hell of Hell to all eternity. Surely then hypocriſie is a dangerous thing, there is exceeding danger of, and danger by this *leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

Uſe. I ſhall commend but one Uſe to be made of this Doctrine at this time, and it is the *beware* in the Text.

To ſtir and provoke you to put forth your utmoſt care, diligence and circumſpection, to *beware of this leaven of the Phariſees, which is hypocriſie.*

Here I could ſhew you how much you are concerned to beware of the Phariſees leaven in Doctrinals, to beware of Doctrines advancing any thing in man, or of man: Doctrines that are derived from any other fountain, than the pure Word of God, as Traditions, Enthuſiaſms, Impulſes beſides or againſt the Word: Doctrines of Will-worſhip, ſuperſtition, voluntary humility, *&c.* Doctrines aſcribing too much to, and laying too much ſtreſs on externals in worſhip not inſtituted by Chriſt: Doctrines of rigid impoſition of things indifferent: Doctrines that have a tendency to blind obedience and implicite faith. Whoever reads the New Teſtament, may ſoon diſcern ſuch were their Doctrines, and this is the leaven of the Phariſees

ſees in Doctrinals; and truly you had need to take care of this, for Doctrines and Principles have no ſmall influence on Converſation and practice.

But I ſhall chuſe rather to proſecute this Uſe, by endeavouring to give an Anſwer and reſolution to two Queſtions, which together conſtitute a great and weighty Caſe of Conſcience.

Queſt. *How may we diſcover and find out this ſubtil cloſe evil of hypocriſie, and convince our own and others ſouls that we are guilty of it, and under the danger of it?*

I muſt here firſt premiſe ſome general *Cautions*, and then produce ſome particular *evidences* and diſcoveries of it. I ſhall not meddle at all with groſs hypocriſie, which is uſually known both to the Hypocrite himſelf, and frequently apparent to others too. *Some mens ſins are open before hand, going before to judgment, and ſome men they follow after:* But I ſhall labour to trace out and unkennel that *latent*, cloſe, and deep *Hypocriſie*, formally *ſelf-deceiving Hypocriſie*, whereby the Hypocrite may cozen others, and himſelf too. 1 Tim. 5. 24.

Here 1. I muſt premiſe theſe Cautions and Negations;

1. That *hic labor, hoc opus*, my task is very hard, my work *difficult*, nice and curious; that it is very difficult to find out the hypocriſie of ones own heart, much more to convince others of the hypocriſie in theirs; for the *heart of man is deceitful above all things.* And hence the moſt ſerious, inquiſitive, jealous, and heart-ſearching Chriſtians have called God in to their help in this work, *Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my reins*, &c. Search my heart and try my reins, examine whether there be any way of wickedneſs in me. *Caution* 1. Jer. 87. 9. Pſal. 139. 23, 24.

2. That as difficult as it is, yet it is *poſſible* and feaſible: for we are not commanded impoſſibilities, when we are required to *ſearch and try our ways and turn unto the Lord:* to examine our hearts, and to *prove our ſelves whether we be in the faith:* whether *our own hearts condemn us not: David, Hezekiah, Job* and *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12, theſe all examined their own hearts, and attained thereby to a knowledg and ſenſe of their own ſincerity. And we are not directed to abſurdities, when we are cautioned to *beware of men*, to take heed of thoſe that *come in ſheeps clothing, but inwardly are ravening Wolves.* And we are not herein bid to make Brick without ſtraw, for *the ſpirit of a man which is in him knoweth the things of a man*; and *as face anſwereth to face* in a glaſs, ſo doth the *heart of man to man.* Nay, we have a far greater help, *viz.* the Spirit of God which *ſearcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* One of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit in the Primitive Church, and very neceſſary for thoſe times (in which Satan was very buſie, and the Canon of Scripture not compleated) was the gift of *diſcerning of ſpirits*: ſome think that by vertue of this gift, *Peter* diſcerned *Ananias* and *Saphira* their hypocriſie, and afterwards *Simon Magus*'s too, which *Philip* could not do, as not having that gift, or ſuch a meaſure of it; but indeed there was no need of any extraordinary gift to diſcern *Simon Magus* by; to any man that had reaſon and but common illumination, *Simon Magus* his hypocriſie might eaſily and clearly appear in that motion of his *Caution* 2. Lam. 3. 40. 2 Cor. 13. 5. 1 Joh. 3. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 11. Prov. 27. 19. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11. 1 Cor. 12. 10. Act. 5. Act. 8.

[Sell

[*Sell me this gift.*] Who but an Hypocrite could have thought it had been to be ſold? and who but an hypocrite would have offered money for it? It was eaſie to conclude him in *the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity.*

And the Miniſters of the Goſpel have authority, calling, and commiſſion (and therefore gifts) to detect and bewray the guiſes and wiles, the depth, and deceits and ſnares of Satan, much more the workings and turnings of mens deceitful hearts; and the Word of God (which is the main and principal weapon of their warfare) *is quick and powerful, a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and it caſts down imaginations, and brings into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* Therefore while we have this Word and Spirit, it is poſſible (though difficult) to diſcover the hypocriſie of our own ſpirits, and to direct others to find out theirs.

Heb. 4. 12.

2 Cor. 10. 9.

Caution 3. It is not a poor ſouls fearing and doubting his hypocriſie, accuſing and charging himſelf with it, crying out of himſelf as a wretched man by reaſon of it, that concludes and determines he is ſuch. See *David* in *Pſal.* 51. 10, 11, 12. charging himſelf ſo; and the Church accuſing her ſelf of *erring from Gods ways, and having their hearts hardned from his fear*; and yet their own expreſſions in the Verſes before, manifeſt the frame of their ſpirits to be exceeding tender and humble. Holy Mr. *Bradford* would many times ſubſcribe himſelf in his Letters, *John the hypocrite*, and *a very painted ſepulchre.* *Agur* one of the wiſeſt men living, condemns himſelf for being *more brutiſh than any man, and not having the underſtanding of a man.* And *David* one of the holieſt and devouteſt men living, upon an ordinary temptation, *viz.* the proſperity of the wicked, was very apt to charge the ways of God with unprofitableneſs; *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency*; but afterward ſeeing his errour, he chargeth it ſo upon himſelf, that he upbraids and condemns himſelf for *fooliſh and ignorant, and a very beaſt before God.* It is uſual with the beſt men to have the worſt thoughts of themſelves,

Iſa. 63. 17.

Verſ. 15, 16.

Fox his Acts and Mon.

Prov. 30. 2.

Pſal. 73. 13.

Verſ. 22.

1. Partly, becauſe as God will give moſt grace to the humble; ſo there is great need of giving more humility to thoſe that have moſt grace.

2. Partly, becauſe where there is true grace, there is an inſatiable deſire of more. The children of God have never enough of *Communion* with God, nor of *conformity* to him: they ſeldom look back and ſay, this thou *haſt*: but ſtill preſs forward to this thou haſt *not*, and this thou *maiſt* and this thou *muſt* have.

Phil. 3. 12, 13.

3. And partly, becauſe as there is much difference between faith in its *direct* and its *reflected* act, between knowing God, and knowing that we know him: between believing, and knowing that we believe: ſo there is between having ſincerity, and finding a feeling of it conſtantly; between not being hypocrites, and a conſtant confidence of it; which would amount to no leſs than full aſſurance. This is not granted to all, and ſeldom to any at all times, that ſo there may be a ſeaſon for the exerciſe of other graces, humility, fear and trembling, fear of ſollicitude, and diligence in making

Phil. 2. 12.

king our calling and election ſure. And this is to be remembred and obſerved, *viz.* That God likes us never the worſe that Satan is ſo much our enemy; but much the better, that by humility, lowlineſs of mind, and ſelf-denial, we ſeem to be our own enemies. 2 Pet. 1.

4. Nor are they foul failings, nor dangerous fallings into groſs ſins (if a man die not impenitently in them) that do conſtitute an hypocrite; indeed reigning ſin doth. *The falls of Gods people may be Horrendæ tempeſtates, & ſtenda naufragia.* The grievous falls of Gods people do evidence there is hypocriſie *in* them; but not that *they* are hypocrites. *David* was guilty of adultery and murther, and puft up with exceeding pride and vain-glory in the multitude of his Subjects, and ſtrength of his Kingdom: but *Davids* repenting and riſing again, cleared him from being an hypocrite, ſo that the Spirit of God teſtifies from his own mouth, that *he was upright, and kept himſelf from his iniquity*, i. e. from the reign and continuance of it; and after his fall he was called a man after Gods own heart: *Thou haſt not been as my ſervant David, who kept all my Commandments, and followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in my ſight.* The Lord overlookt his adultery and murther; for indeed he had *put away* his ſin (or made it *paſs over*, as it is in the *Original*) that is to Chriſt. *Hezekiah*'s heart was lifted up, and he rendered not according to the benefit done unto him; but *Hezekiah* was humbled, and the wrath of God came not upon him all his dayes; he was not an hypocrite, no *he did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done.* So *Peter* denied and forſwore his Maſter, though he had many warnings, and made many promiſes to the contrary; yet he repented and *wept bitterly*: his fall ſhewed him to be a weak frail man, but proved him not an hypocrite. *Job* confeſſed himſelf a ſinner, and that many were his *iniquities* and *tranſgreſſions*; but *Job* would never confeſs himſelf an *hypocrite*: no, he would keep his *integrity* till he died; for it is not the falling into ſin, or the being guilty of it, but *regarding iniquity in the heart*, that denominates an hypocrite; otherwiſe all men were hypocrites, for certainly all men are ſinners, all ſhut up under ſin. *Caution* 4. Pſal. 18. 1 King. 14. 8. 2 Chron. 32. 25. 26. 2 Chron. 29. 2. Job 13. 23. Job 27. 5, 6. Pſal. 66. 18. Rom. 3.

5. Nor is it backſliding into the ſame ſins that makes a man an hypocrite: *David* had got into *a way of lying* to ſave his life: *viz.* 1 *Sam.* 21. in the 2d verſe he told one lye, in the end of the verſe another, and in the 8th verſe another. He prayes that God would take from him *the way of lying.* And the promiſe of Mercy and pardon is not only to ſinners, but backſlidings; *I will heal their back-ſlidings.* And ſuch are invited to return to God: *Return thou back-ſliding Iſrael, and I will heal your back-ſlidings: Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* Indeed to be *bent to back-ſliding*, is a dangerous ſign of prevailing hypocriſie, and yet ſome in this caſe ſhall turn and *walk after the Lord.* We do not read of the people of God, that they did revolt and backſlide into the ſame groſs ſins after repentance; nor *David* into adultery, nor *Peter* to faint-heartedneſs, nor *Paul* to perſecution. But yet this may be ſo, and proviſion is made in that caſe, by the promiſe of healing back *Caution* 5. Hoſ. 14. 4. Jer. 3. 22. Hoſ. 11. 2, 8, 9, 10.

backſlidings. Though it coſt them dear to recover their peace, after revolting into groſs ſins, after pardon and peace ſpoken; and it will lie upon their conſciences as an heavy aggravation of their ſin and folly:
1 King. 11. 9. But yet it doth not conclude that all was done in hypocriſie before, and
Pſal. 85. 8. that they were but meer hypocrites; no more than *Solomon*'s falling and Idolatry (which he repented of, witneſs the book of *Eccleſiaſtes*) doth conclude him an hypocrite when he built the Temple, and was the *Jedidiah*, the beloved of the Lord.

Caution 6. 6. Nor is it every degree of tendency to hypocriſie, that denominates a man an hypocrite, and brings him under the condemnation to have his portion with hypocrites. For there is the ſeed of this as well as of all
Jer. 17. 2. other ſins in the heart: and the holy Prophet *Jeremiah* cries out, *the heart is deceitful*, &c. he meant his *own* heart as well as *others*; and *Solomon* the wiſeſt man gives this advice, *keep thy heart*. Proverbs were experiments, his own: and *David* the devouteſt, ſaith, *all men are lyars*, all deceitful; and there are the remains of hypocriſie in the beſt, the reign of it is only in hypocrites; hypocriſie may have its *preſence*, but not *predominance* in the ſincereſt children of God. Thus you ſee what doth not conclude an hypocrite, though it come very near.

2. Now I ſhall ſhew what cannot clear and acquit a man from an hypocrite, though it proceed very fairly, and very far, which makes it ſo difficult to diſcover this leaven of the Phariſees, hypocriſie.

1. It doth not acquit and diſcharge men from this charge of hypocriſie, That they hear the Word with ſome delight; that they believe with
Matt. 13. ſome faith, ſo did the *ſtony ground*. That they take ſome pains for it, ſo did they *Joh. 6.* That they perform ſome duties in obedience to it, ſo did *Herod* Mark 6. That they are moral and without blame in ſome things outwardly, ſo was the *young man*.
Matt. 19. That they are zealous againſt ſome publick corruptions, ſo was *Jehu*. That they have illumination and excellent knowledg, by a common work of the ſpirit; ſo have the *Devils*, *Judas*, and thoſe *Apoſtates*, Heb. 6. That they had ſome ſweet taſtes and reliſhes from the Word imbraced, ſo had they in *Heb. 6.* and no doubt *Ananias* and *Saphira* had. Nor doth this acquit them and ſet them out of danger, that
Iſa. 33. 14. they have ſome ſerious cares and fears about their ſalvation: ſo had *Felix*, ſo had the *ſinners in Zion*, they were *afraid*, *fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites*: they were afraid of dwelling with *devouring fire*, *and everlaſting burnings*.
Rom. 8. 15. *Judas* and *Spira* had fears to purpoſe: and the ſpirit of bondage is but a common work of the ſpirit, if it reſt there; in *Pharoah* there was fear but no ſincerity: in the Devils fear, but no penitency: nor is it ſome reluctancy againſt ſin by an awakened conſcience; *Herod* had ſo, and *Pilate* had ſo, *Balaam* ſo: nor many deſires of good; *Balaam deſired to die the death of the righteous*: The *five Virgins* deſired Oyl: there be the *deſires of the ſloathful*, *that even kill them*; deſires, like the *turning of a door*
Prov. 26. 14. *upon hinges*, never the farther off: deſires of the wavering man, the
Jam. 1. 6, 7. *double-minded man*, when a man hath *ſome* mind to grace, but *more* to luſt:
Aug. in *Confeſſ.* as *Auguſtine* that prayed for grace and chaſtity, but his heart ſecretly prayed the while, *not yet Lord*. There may be pouring out of prayers as the

Nine-

Ninevites, they cried mightily; *they poured forth a prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them*, and yet they brought forth but wind: *When he ſlew them, then they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God*; *nevertheleſs they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lied to him with their tongues*, &c. Nor is it ſome hopes, *Matt.* 25. *Joh.* 8. 13. *Luke* 18. If all this cannot ſave a man from the guilt of hypocriſie, and portion of hypocrites, what ſhall? *If theſe come ſhort of Heaven, where ſhall they appear that come far ſhort of them?* Oh then who can be ſaved? *Streight is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few find it.* Salvation work is to be wrought out *with fear and trembling. Beware then of the leaven, &c.* Jonah 3. 8. Iſa. 26. 16, 17. Pſal. 68. 34, 36. Luk. 13. 24. Phil. 2. 12.

How then may we know how it is with our ſouls; whether we are in the number of hypocrites, and tending to their portion? whether this deluding, deſtroying, predominating, damning leaven of hypocriſie be in us?

1. A loving of the world, and the things of the world; *the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life*, this is a fearful evidence of hypocriſie; for it is inconſiſtent with, and deſtructive of, the love of God; and the loving God above all things, is the very *eſſence*, the *ſumma totalis* of ſincerity; and whatſoever contraries this, is the very *eſſence* of hypocriſie. I know there be many ſubterfuges and evaſions, and it is an hard matter to convince men, that they love the world in S. *Johns* ſenſe. But if a man make theſe luſts of the eye, of the fleſh, and pride of life; honours, riches, carnal and ſenſual pleaſures, his aim, his intereſt, his chief delight: If the heart and affections be let out to theſe things immoderately: If the ſweeteſt, freeſt thoughts of the ſoul be let out to them; either about the getting, enjoying, or deſiring, or admiring, or advancing them. If the activity and indeavours of the ſoul bend and are imployed chiefly this way; though there may be many excellent performances, expreſſions, affections, yet the leaven of the Phariſee is there, and ſours all, and all the reſt is but in hypocriſie. This leavened all *Balaams* pretences, divinations; all his goodly expreſſions, and profeſſions, both to God, the Angels, and men, that he would do nothing, ſpeak nothing, but what God would have him; (as much as to ſay, he would be upright, and ſincere) yet ſtill he looked after the reward, (*Balaaks* promotion) this was the error of *Balaam*, *he followed the wages of unrighteouſneſs*: and this leavened all *Judas* his hearing and converſing with Chriſt, his over-officiouſneſs. Some conceive from *Judas* his kiſſing Chriſt in the garden, *&c.* that he was more than ordinarily familiar and officious about him, and made more pretences of love and ſervice to him; but he appeared a *painted ſepulchre*, an hypocrite; he loved the *wages of iniquity*: it was the world and hypocriſie were predominant in him; and now he is gone to *his own place*, the place and portion of hypocrites: he was as it were out of his place, or in anothers place all the while before: and this leavened all the Phariſees alms, faſtings, prayers, profeſſions, and pretences; they were *covetous* ſaith one Evangeliſt: and they *loved the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God*, ſaith another: and that is in effect, they loved the *Sign* 1. 1 Joh. 2. 15, 16. Matth. 22. 37. Jude 11. Luke 16. 14. John 12. 43.

Joh. 2. 16. Matt. 6. 24. 1 Cor. 7. 27, 30. *favour* of men, more than the *favour* of God: in ſhort, they loved the *world, and the love of the Father was not in them.* There can be *no ſerving God and Mammon:* if we cannot moderate and temperate affections, both in the deſires, in the affections, in the uſe, in the injoyments, and moderate our cares and griefs in the loſs and want of worldly things; to have them as if we had them not, to rejoyce in and for them as if we rejoyced not; to grieve for the want of them as if we grieved not: ſeeing they are to us as if they were not; they are a *ſcheame*, a repreſentation that Gal. 6. 15. paſſeth away. Nay if the *world* be not *crucified* to us, and *we to the world*, we are ſtill in danger of this gall of bitterneſs, *this leaven of hypocriſie.* This is exemplified in the *Jews* in *Babylon*, they would come to the Prophet, *and ſit before him as Gods people* (with much ſeeming reverence, and appear- Ezek. 33. 31. ance of devotion and affection); *they hear thy words but they will not do them: for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſs.* Therefore as you love your ſouls, beware of the love of the world, and ſet not your affections on things below, but on things above, elſe you will not be able to avoid the guilt and danger of hypocriſie.

Sign 2. 1 Theſ. 1. 5. Heb. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 5. 2. *A not loving the Word of God, a not receiving it as the Word of God, when it comes as the Word of God in power.* It is the property of the Word of God to be *quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing to the dividing of ſoul and ſpirit, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, to caſt down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Chriſt.* This is the Word of God, and this it doth as the Word of God; theſe are the properties of it. Such a Word of God an hypocrite cannot love, becauſe he loves this carnal ſinful ſelf, he loves his luſts which this Word oppoſeth. Pſal. 36. 2. *He flattereth himſelf in his own eyes, until his iniquities be found to be hateful.* The Word in power will ſhew him that all is ill, when he flattereth himſelf that all is very well. *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy,* ſaith *Ahab*? An hypocrite thinks he hath no greater enemy than a faithful Miniſter, becauſe hypocriſie hath no greater 1 King. 21. 20. enemy than the Word of Truth, which will detect and make it odious. 1 King. 22. 8. So *Ahab* hated *Micaiah* and his Miniſtry, becauſe *he prophefied evil to him* in his evil ways; he ſpake the Word of God, the truth to him, which Mar. 6. 17, 18, 20. *Ahabs* corrupt life, and hypocritical heart could not bear. *Herod* heard *John Baptiſt* gladly in other things, but when he preached againſt *his having his brothers wife*, when he came home to his conſcience, to his very darling Act. 24. 25. ſin, then *Herod* ſtopt his mouth, *ſhut him up in priſon. Felix* trembles, and diſmiſſeth *Paul* when he came ſo cloſe; an hypocrite may love to hear the ſame Miniſter on another ſubject. The very notion of Religion is amiable and acceptable to ingenuous perſons; nay he may love the Matt. 5. Word may come to others, but to himſelf (during the predominacy of hypocriſie) the powerful Word neither read, nor preached, can be well-come, becauſe it applies it ſelf to the cutting off of his right hand, and plucking out his right eye.

Sign. 3. 3. A long and continual unprofitableneſs under the powerful Word of God, is a fearful ſign of hypocriſie. What warnings and inſtructions had

Judas?

Judas? What convictions and reprehenſions had *Ahab* and *Herod*? and yet as to thoſe things which the Word oppoſed, they were ſtill the ſame men. If men that hear much, mind nothing; if there be no change, no alteration, but they are ſtill where and what they were; where they are ſtill as carnal, as earthly, as they were ten, twenty years ago, though they hear much, and are as *earth that drinketh in the rain*; nay, though *they have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*, if yet they bring not forth *meet fruit for him that dreſſeth it, that ground is rejected, that heart is near to curſing and burning:* there is ſome guile and hypocriſie there, there would be ſome growing elſe. When the word is *precept upon precept, line upon line* (*i. e.* very plentiful) and yet no amendment, there is hypocriſie, they will fall backward, *be broken, and ſnared, and taken.* Oh 'tis no ſmall matter to be dead, unprofitable, unaltered hearers. It is a fearful ſign of hypocriſie, and that there are many hypocrites in the boſome of the Church.

Heb. 6. 7, 8. 1 Pet. 2. 2. Hoſ. 6. 4, 5.

4. The *principles* and *ends* of mens actions and performances, are a great diſcovery of the ſincerity or inſincerity of mens hearts. If mens *principles* be no higher than good education, and being converſant with good or ſtrict men; which ſeems to be *Paul's* caſe: or no higher than good nature and moral qualifications, this ſeems to be the *young man's caſe*; they are no farther than thoſe were at that time, in an ignorant and inſincere condition. He that is really and ſincerely a good Chriſtian, doth all as *from God* and *Chriſt, he is all, and in all.* Chriſt is *wiſdom* and *ſanctification* to him. He acts and performs duties not only from ſtrength of parts, and acquired qualifications, but from ſtrength of grace, and infuſed habits, *from* God, and *for* God, from a *new heart*, Ezek. 36. 25, from the *Law written in the heart*, from the *love of God ſhed abroad in the heart*, and *conſtraining* to love; from the *Divine nature* communicated to the *heart*; from *Chriſt* by his *Spirit dwelling in the heart*; from the *fear* of God *poſſeſſing* and *eſtabliſhing* the heart. Theſe be the *ſprings* and *principles* of a ſincere Chriſtians ſpiritual life and actions; and where they act and bear rule, it is no wonder if ſuch motions and performances be produced, as the world may admire, but not imitate. *Saul's* life (after his Converſion) was a kind of *conſtant miracle*, ſo much he did, and ſo much he ſuffered, and ſo much denied himſelf, that if he lived in theſe days his life would be a miracle; but yet if we conſider the *principles* that he was acted by, the great wonder will be, not that he did *ſo much*, but that he did *no more*: for ſaith he, *Chriſt liveth in me, and the life that I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God*, &c. And ſo the *ends* of a mans actions are a great diſcovery of ſincerity or hypocriſie. If a mans *ends* be lower than God himſelf, and obeying, glorifying, walking with, and injoying God; if either praiſe, gain, reputation, nay acceptation with good people; nay if a mans end be to ſtop the mouth of natural conſcience *only*, or *only* to avoid danger and wrath to come. Theſe may be the works of a Saint, but yet the ends of an hypocrite. And *omnis actio niſi modificata a fine ſuas quas avertere amittit laudes.* *Balaam* ſpake religiouſly, multiplied Altars and Sacrifices, but

Sign 4.

Act. 26, 5. Phil. 3. 5, 6. Mark 10.

Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 30. Rom. 11. 24. Jer. 31. 33. Rom. 3. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 2 Pet. 1. 4. Eph. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 13. 5. Jer. 32. 40.

Gal. 2. 20.

his end was not God, but the wages of iniquity. *Jehu* deſtroyed *Ahabs* houſe, executed vengeance, Gods judgements againſt that wicked Family, reſolutely and throughly deſtroyed *Baal*, &c. but his ends were carnal, the eſtabliſhment of the Kingdom to him and his Family: *Ahab* and the *Ninivites* faſted in ſackcloath, but it was *meerly* to avoid the judgement
Hoſ. 7. 14. threatned. The *Iſraelites* cried and prayed, but they did *but howl for*
Zech. 7. 5. *corn and wine.* The *Jews* in Captivity faſted, but *did you at all faſt to me, even to me, ſaith the Lord?* It ſeems men may pray, and yet not cry to the Lord; faſt, and yet not to the Lord. It is the *end* dignifies, or debaſeth the action, rectifies or adulterates it. Look to your ends if you would not be hypocrites. If your *end* be leſs than God, his glory and
Hoſ. 10. 1. pleaſing of him; You are but *empty Vines, and bring forth fruit to your ſelves. Simplicity* in ones *ends*, accompany *ſincerity* in the *actions*; when
2 Cor. 1. 12. not *fleſhly wiſdom, but the grace of God* carries and governs the action, then we may *have rejoycing*, elſe all may be in hypocriſie.

Sign 5. 5. If thou canſt not bring thy heart to *ſuffer* for the Name of *Chriſt*, when thou haſt a good *Cauſe*, and a good *Call*, and amongſt the good
Matt. 13. 21. *people* of God, though thou *hear the word, and receiveſt it with joy for a time, yet when perſecution ariſeth* becauſe of the Word, *by and by thou art offended*; if there be no more deep rooting of it in thee, but in temptation thou fall away, it is apparent thy *heart* is but *ſtony ground*, and thou
Luke 8. 13. art *leavened* with *hypocriſie.* If your faith cannot bear the tryal, if it be not *furnace* faith, *tryed* faith, it is not *precious* faith, it is but *common*
1 Pet. 1. 7. faith, *counterfeit* faith; it will not be found *to praiſe honour and glory at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt:* nay, if thou canſt not (in ſome caſes)
Heb. 11. 25, chooſe *to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon, and eſteem the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt*; it is apparent thy *faith*, and thy *heart* is not
Matt. 16. 24. *right*; thou haſt not a thorough *reſpect to the recompence of reward*, thou doſt not *ſee him that is inviſible.* That man that cannot, will not *deny himſelf, take up his croſs, and follow Chriſt*, he is not a true Diſciple of Chriſt, and in the end will find, that in *ſaving his life he hath loſt it.*
Rev. 12. 11. Satan and Antichriſt muſt be *overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the teſtimony, and by not loving our lives to the death*, &c. and he that will not *ſuffer* with Chriſt, ſhall not *reign* with Chriſt; and if
Rom. 8. 17. tribulation occaſion men to go out *from us, it is becauſe they were not*
1 Joh. 2. 19. *of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.* Tribulation is the touchſtone, it will diſtinguiſh ſincerity from hy-
1 Cor. 13. pocriſie: and though it is true a hypocrite may *ſometime* ſuffer, yet he
Rom. 8. 17. that will *never* ſuffer, muſt be a hypocrite; if *we ſuffer* not with him, we ſhall not reign with him.

Sign 6. 6. If thou embraceſt and favoureſt any *iniquity in thy heart*; if there
Pſal. 66. 18. be any corrupt luſt, or ungodly way that thou art ſo wedded to, that thou canſt not, wilt not be divorced from, but huggeſt it in thy boſome, hideſt it, pleadeſt for it, though it ſeem never ſo harmleſs and tolerable, yet if it be againſt Gods Law, though *thou makeſt many prayers* with the
Iſa. 1. 16, 17, *Jews*, and performeſt many ſervices, and doſt many things with *Herod*,
18. and

and haſt many glorious and gracious expreſſions with *Balaam*, yet thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity. Thy *heart* is a *divided* heart, thou art a *double*, *unſtable perſon*, thy prayers will not be regarded, and all thy ſervices will be rejected by the All-ſeeing jealous God, *before whom all things are open and naked*, and with whom thou haſt to do; becauſe *if thou regardeſt thine iniquity in thy heart*, the riſe and root of all thy duties and performances, is but the *leaven of the Phariſees which is hypocriſie*. Methinks, beloved, this ſhould ſtartle us, and I wiſh it may: if any of you ſhould be *prickt at the heart*, and *tremble at this word* of God; and ask me *what ſhall we do* that we may acquit our ſelvés from this leaven of hypocriſie, and be ſaved from the wrath it expoſeth us to? I ſhould anſwer, Mark 6. Hoſ. 10. 2. Jam. 1. 6, 7. Heb. 4. 13.

1. *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, for many will ſeek, but ſhall not be able*; that is, be *very ſerious*, and throughly reſolved, and induſtrious in a caſe of this weight and concernment: *Be diligent that you may be found of him in peace. Set your heart to theſe things, for it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your life*, &c. It is ſo weighty a buſineſs, that it is work enough for all your life, and it will be your life of conſolation, from which will flow peace, and joy, and aſſurance. Make but this out clearly, that thou art no hypocrite, that hypocriſie is not predominant in thee; but that *in ſimplicity and ſincerity of heart thou haſt thy converſation* (not with carnal wiſdom) thou haſt then occaſion of much rejoycing; but if thou art negligent in this, thy doubts and fears will hang upon and keep thee low to thy dying day; nay it were well if that were all: for to be *negligent* in this buſineſs, is as good as to *do nothing*, for it is to do nothing to purpoſe, and that is to have all thy work undone, and to be undone thy ſelf for ever. Moſt hypocrites did *ſeek* to enter in; *Balaam*, *Herod*, the *five fooliſh Virgins*, had they *ſtrove*, they had entred in at the ſtrait Gate. Wiſhings and wouldings, and ſloathful deſires, to Heaven will not place you out of danger of hypocriſie: for very hypocrites have done as much; but ſtriving indeed, ſetting your whole heart to it, being very diligent to *purge out this leaven, working out your ſalvation with fear and trembling, giving all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; this will place you out of danger, and give *you an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of our Lord*. If ever that of the *Engliſh* Proverb be true, it is here, *As good never a whit, as never the better*. Indeed there is ſo much work on our hands, ſuch commands, ſuch promiſes to believe, ſuch corruptions to ſubdue, ſuch temptations to reſiſt, the careleſneſs of carnal ſailing in any of which will charge us with hypocriſie. So many ſuch ſubtile and powerful adverſaries to conflict withal, ſuch a world, ſuch a fleſh, ſuch principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places, ſuch deceitful hearts, deceitful above all things, to ſearch, and ſift, and purge from this leaven, that it is impoſſible to be free of it without mighty ſtriving, contending, and giving much diligence. Luke 13. 24. 2 Pet. 3. 14. Deut. 32. 46, 47. 2 Cor. 1. 12. Phil. 2. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11.

2. If you would take heed of hypocriſie, take heed of *ſecurity*. There are no greater flatterers, and no greater deceivers of themſelves and others, than

than hypocrites, they flatter themſelves in their own eyes; all flattery
Pſal. 36. 2. is dangerous, but *ſelf-flattery* of all other moſt dangerous, and of all others in the buſineſs of ſalvation moſt *pernicious*. It is the advice of the Devil, and thy own hypocriſie, to favour thy ſelf, flatter thy ſelf,
Lam. 3. 40. hope well, *&c.* The advice of God is, *Search and try your ways, ex-*
Phil. 2. 12. *amine your ſelves*, 2 Cor. 13. 5, *Work out your ſalvation with fear and*
Pſal. 130. 23. *trembling*. Yea call upon God to ſearch you. It is a fear of carefulneſs, and ſollicitude, a trembling of jealouſie and ſuſpicion, as to our own hearts, not of diffidence, or deſpair as to God, that we are directed to. Had the fooliſh Virgins had but this care, this fear, they had had *oyl in their veſſels*, as well as *Lamps*. Had thoſe glorious profeſſors in *Matt.* 7. 22, had but this jealouſie, and ſuſpicion, they might
Joh. 8. 13. have eſcaped that diſmal ſentence, *Depart from me you workers of iniquitie.* Perhaps your faith may be but a fancy, your hopes but preſumptuous,
Hoſ. 10. 1. *a Spiders web*; perhaps your fruit may be but that of an *empty vine to*
Hoſ. 7. 14. *your ſelf*; perhaps your prayers may be but *howlings for corn and wine*;
Zach. 7. 5. perhaps your faſting may not be to God: *Commune much with your*
Pſal. 72. 6. *own heart, and let your ſpirit make diligent ſearch, keep your heart with all keeping*; be jealous of every thing your heart hath to do with; your affairs, friends, comforts, recreations, thoughts, ſollicitudes, graces.
Prov. 28. 14. Oh bleſſed or happy is the man that *thus feareth always*, he ſhall ne-
Prov. 23. 17. ver do amiſs; this is to be in *the fear of God all the day long*; and
Prov. 1. this *fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom*, the *end* of wiſdom,
Eccleſ. 12. and *wiſdom* it *ſelf*: for this will make a man wiſe to eſcape the wiles
Job 28. of Satan, and the hypocriſie of his own heart, and ſo make him wiſe to ſalvation.

Rom. 11. *ult.* 3. *Keep God always in your minds:* if we have all *from* him, we ſhould be all *to* him; If we live and move in him, our hearts and minds ſhould be always on him. This is the cauſe of all the wicked-
Pſal. 10. 4. neſs and hypocriſie in the world, men will *not ſeek after God, God is*
Heb. 11. 26, *not in all their thoughts.* And this is the ground of all the glorious
27. performances of the Saints, they *ſaw him that was inviſible*, as *Micaiah*
1 King. 22. 19. *ſaw the Lord in his Throne*, and therefore feared not to deal plainly and ſincerely with *Ahab*, though on his Throne. When the Pſalmiſt had convinced and reproved the wickedneſs and formal hypocriſie of
Pſal. 50. 22. ungodly preſumptuous men, he concludes, *Now conſider this you that forget God, &c.* Intimating this to be the reaſon of all ungodly hypocritical converſation, a forgetting God. The remedy muſt be contrary to the diſeaſe: if we would be no hypocrites, we muſt much remember,
Job 22. 21. think of, and obſerve, and eye God by faith. *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and ſo good ſhall come to thee.* If men were acquainted with God,
Mic. 7. 18. 19. and did not forget him; acquainted with his Omniſciency, *Pſal.* 139. 1, 2. with his All-ſufficiency, *Gen.* 17. 1, with the power of his anger, *Pſal.* 90. 11, the infiniteneſs of his goodneſs, *Iſa.* 55. 7, 8, they would conclude, and live under the awe and power of ſuch concluſions. Oh then he is too *great* to be tempted and provoked, too *excellent* to be ſlighted and undervalued, too *good* to be loſt, too *wiſe* to be deceived,

and

and this would ſuppreſs and ſupplant the leaven of the Phariſees *hypocriſie.*

4. Be much and daily in the *renewing faith and repentance.* If there be ſuch danger of hypocriſie, there is neceſſity of renewing faith and repentance for fear hypocriſie may be in them. Riſe and return as ſoon as thou art convinced of thy ſin; ſo did *Paul*, ſo did *Peter* as ſoon as the Lord turned and looked upon him. If repentance were haſtned after ſin, and thou wouldeſt take care and pains to break thy heart conſtantly for ſin, this would break it from ſin. A man ſhould find that *it were an evil and a bitter thing to forſake the Lord, and that his fear was not in thee, and a broken heart God would not deſpiſe*, becauſe it is apparent that is no hypocritical heart. And though former faith and repentance may be counterfeit and hypocritical, yet enſuing and renewed faith may be ſound and ſincere, and we have much ground to renew thoſe acts, whoſe ſoundneſs and validity we have much ground to ſuſpect; if all have been falſe or fained, or partial formerly, we have the more cauſe in a new act to give up and bind our ſouls ſincerely to it, and this will free you from hypocriſie. Gal. 1. 16. Luke 22. 61. Jer. 2. 19. Pſal. 51.

5. Put forth your greateſt ſtrength and care to mortifie thoſe luſts and corruptions that are the fewel to hypocriſie, pride, vain-glory, worldly-mindedneſs, ſelf-love. Theſe are the fuel of hypocriſie, they beget it, and they nouriſh it. If the love of the world, and worldly favour did not prevail much over men, there would be no hypocriſie in the world; and cheriſh and ſtrengthen the graces which cannot conſiſt with it, but will be always fighting againſt, and oppoſing it, as love to God, humility, ſelf-denial, heavenly-mindedneſs, mortifying the fleſh, much communion with God: *if theſe be in you and abound, you ſhall not be barren nor unfruitful, but ſhall make your calling and election ſure*, and ſo be out of the *peril*, yea and much out of the *fear* of hypocriſie.

6. *Preſs* the Lord much, and *urge* him cloſe with the promiſes of a *new heart*, of *circumciſing your hearts*, and cauſing you *to love the Lord with all your heart, of putting his fear into your heart.* If he urge and preſs you (in his word) with his precepts, and your duty, do you urge and preſs him as much in your prayers, with his promiſes, ſpread his own hand-writing and ſeals before him; as *Auguſtine* relates his Mother did in her prayers for his Converſion; ſay, Lord theſe promiſes were made to be made good to ſome, and why not to me? I hunger, I need, I thirſt, I wait; here is thy hand-writing in thy Word, and in the laſt Sacrament I had thy Seal affixed to it, I am reſolved to be as importunate till I have obtained, and as thankful afterwards, as by Grace I ſhall be inabled, being convinced I am utterly loſt and undone, if thou heareſt not *the deſires of the humble* in this particular; and if thou doſt hear and grant, I am ſo well acquainted with my ſelf, and mine own heart, that I have nothing to glory in, but I ſhall wholly *glory in the Lord*; and I do reſolve and believe I ſhall to eternity celebrate and magnifie the riches of the glory of thy Grace. Thy promiſes are the diſcovery of thy purpoſes, and vouchſafed as materials Eze. 36. 25, 26. Deut. 30. 6. Jer. 32. 40. Aug. *Conf. Chirographa tua ingerebat tibi.* Pſal. 10. 17.

materials for our prayers; and in my ſupplications I am reſolved every day to preſent and tender them back to thee every day, and if thou wilt have regard to them there, and appear to be a God of truth to my ſoul, a poor creature that hath long feared to burn in Hell for hypocriſie, will be made, ſecured, and made happy for ever. I am reſolved to wait upon thee, and to caſt my ſoul upon thee in this way, and thou haſt aſſured me thou art a *God of judgment*; thou didſt promiſe in judgment, thou kneweſt what thou didſt in making ſuch promiſes, and thou wil be a God of judgment, thou knoweſt when and where to make them good, and thou haſt pronounced, *Bleſſed are all they that wait for thee*; and on thee I will wait, and for this bleſſing I will hope and look. Oh beloved, if there be but ſuch an heart in us, and ſuch wreſtlings, as *Ambroſe* told *Monica*, a ſoul of ſuch prayers and tears ſhould not periſh.

Iſa. 30. 18.

Aug. *Confeſ. Impoſſibile filium tantarum lachrimarum perire.*

I could have added much more, but if theſe Characters and Directions be carefully obſerved, you will beware of, and ſhall eſcape the leaven of hypocriſie. And that you may be careful to obſerve them,

Conſider 1. That the purging out this leaven, is the great care and buſineſs of a Chriſtians life; this will afford him fear and trembling-work to his dying day; this, till it be done, makes *the gate* ſo *ſtreight, and the way* ſo *narrow to life*, that *few find it*; and if it be done, renders all the ſervice of Chriſt ever after an *eaſie yoak*, and a *light burden*.

Matt 7. 13.

Matt. 11. 30.

2. This, if it be done, gives us actual poſſeſſion of the *Kingdom of God* in grace, which conſiſts *of righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt*, and adminiſters an aſſured and *abundant entrance into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in glory*.

Rom. 14. 17.

2 Pet. 1. 11.

3. This will prevent the Devils everlaſting inſulting over us; is this the end of all thy praying and hearing, *&c.* and defying me? nay upbraiding Chriſt, as a learned and holy man feared; I have him, I have gotten him from thee, for all thy blood, thy Miracles, thy Goſpel, thy wooings, thy beſeechings, thy knockings and ſtrivings of thy Spirit; for all thy illuminating them, and making them taſte of the powers of the world to come: I have cozened thee of them at thy very gates of Heaven, and by my devices ſhipwrackt them in the very mouth of the haven. Oh I would not give the Devil occaſion to upbraid and inſult thus againſt Chriſt at the laſt day, for the world. And this would prevent Conſciences gnawing and galling to eternity. What are all my deſires, my ſeekings and knockings, Prayers, Faſts, Sacraments, hearing in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, waiting at the poſts of Gods houſe early and late? Have I forſaken ſo many ſins, denied my ſelf ſo many contents and pleaſures, ſubdued ſo many luſts, born ſo many ſcoffs, ſuffered ſo much in my body and eſtate, and all for Hell at laſt. This would be the Hell of Hell; and all this may be prevented, if we would *beware of the leaven of hypocriſie*, and ſeriouſly obſerve thoſe Characters, and carefully practice thoſe Directions.

Baſil.

4. Conſider the means you have long had, and yet do enjoy, Gods admirable

admirable forbearance and patience, a powerful Miniſtries inceſſant labours and pains, and awakened conſciences clamours and warnings; a danger, and evils (if you be negligent) intolerable; a reward (if you obſerve the *beware* in the Text) eternal and inconceivable; your life ſhort and uncertain, your death appointed moſt certain, and you know not how near; the world and the luſts thereof (even thoſe that feed and foment hypocriſie) paſſing away, and that now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation: And if you were ever ſerious in your lives, now be ſo; and if ever God ſpake to your hearts and conſciences, the Lord in mercy ſpeak this, *Beware of the leaven of the Phariſees.*

1 Joh. 2. 17.
2 Cor. 6. 2.

What muſt Chriſtians do, that the influence of the Ordinances may abide upon them?

1 Chron. XXIX. 18.

O Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael, our Fathers: keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.

IN the preceding Chapter we have *Davids* Oration, or if you will his Sermon; the deſign of which was, to excite the people to a contribution for the erecting of a Temple, and promoting the publick worſhip of God. It begins *verſ.* 2. of that Chapter, and is continued to the 6th *verſe* of this *Chapter.*

This Sermon was effectual upon the Auditory; *David* had the happineſs (which the beſt Orators, and moſt powerful Preachers often want) not only τὸν λόγον, but τὸν βίον: he not only ſpoke what was in it ſelf perſwaſive, but did actually perſwade his hearers to comply with his deſign. The effect thereof is expreſſed *verſ.* 6, 7, 8, *they offered*, and (which was the marrow and fatneſs of their offering) *they offered willingly.* Though will-worſhip be the worſt ſervice of all other, yet thoſe that ſerve God willingly, are the beſt worſhippers: and therefore *David* in this Sermon commends ſuch ſervice to his ſon, *chap.* 28. *verſ.* 9, *And thou Solomon my ſon, know thou the God of thy father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.* None ſerve God with a perfect heart, but thoſe who ſerve him with a willing mind; to ſuch a temper were the people wrought by this powerful exhortation, *verſe.* 9, *with a perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord.* Hereupon *David* much affected with his ſucceſs in this affair (*David the King alſo rejoyced with great joy*) his ſoul being now upon the wing, he flies to God by prayer, and therewith concludes his Sermon. The prayer conſiſts of petition and thankſgiving, both of them not conformed

formed to any common model; but suiting the particular occasion now before him. He blessed God for making such an impression upon the hearrs of the people, as moved them to offer, and *after this sort* to offer, so chearfully, so generously; from *ver.* 10, to 18. and beseecheth God still to keep their hearts in such a temper, to make this holy impression durable and abiding, *ver.* 18, *O Lord God of Abraham*, &c. *keep this for ever in the imaginations*, &c. Where we have the enforcement of the petition, and the matter of it. It is inforced from the Covenant of God, by vertue of which, he was *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel*, and had laid an obligment on himself, to have a gracious respect to their posterity; hence this expression is frequenly used, being no small incouragement to the faithful, to pray for Covenant-mercies, and to pray in faith.

The matter of the Petition, that which he prays for, is, that the effect which his words had upon the people might be durable and continuing, that the efficacy thereof might abide upon their souls, and every part thereof: that it might sink into the depths of their hearts, and stick fast there: that it might pierce through their fancies and *imaginations* into their mind and *thoughts*, and through their *thoughts* into their *hearts* and affections; that the Lord would continue it there, and continue it long there, even *for ever*.

David was apprehensive what a slippery and inconstant thing the heart of man is, how like a deceitful bow, to which he elsewhere compares it; how apt to slacken on a sudden, when it hath been bended to any good inclinations or resolutions, by the power of the Word, or any other Ordinance; What an unhappy womb it is, how ordinarily holy motions miscarry before the heart hath gone out its full time with them. What danger there was, lest their righteousness, which now made such a flourishing appearence, might prove like the morning cloud, or the early dew. And therefore having raised their hearts to so good a posture, he takes the best course to fix them there. His words having had a powerful influence upon their souls, he useth the best means to render it durable and abiding. Hence Observe,

The people of God should endeavour to keep the influence of the Ordinances abiding upon their souls. Doctr.

I must not prosecute this Doctrine in the usual method, but mention it only, as leading us to the Practical Case at this time to be resolved. A conscientious hearer observing what his duty is, will be presently inquisitive how he may perform it: the *duty* is made known in the Observation, the *inquiry* is in the Case before us.

What must be done that the influences of the Ordinances may abide upon us?
By the *Ordinances* we understand those principally which are publick, the Word, Sacraments, and Prayer. The Text and this exercise leads us to have a more special respect to the Word, which we shall a little observe, but so as not to exclude the rest. By the *influence* of the *Ordinances*, is meant the effect they have upon us, while we are imployed in them; their gracious or comforting efficacy, that which tends to make our hearts

and lives more holy or more comfortable; that whereby our ſoul sare quickned, ſtrengthned, reſtored or refreſhed. By its *abiding on us*, underſtand the continuance of this effect after the duty is done, that ſo the Ordinances of God be not like thoſe humane Ordinances (the Apoſtle ſpeaks of) which *periſh in the uſing*, Col. 2. 20, 22. If you will have it ſtated clearly and more at large, take it thus; *What courſe muſt we take that the gracious and comforting efficacy of publick Ordinances may not only reach us while we are imployed in them, but may continue on us afterwards, ſo as we may walk under the ſenſe and power thereof all along?*

To reſolve this without further preamble, The courſe you muſt take for this purpoſe, lies in the practice of ſome things, and the avoiding of others. The things to be practiſed, take notice of in theſe ſeverals:

1. Get new hearts, and get them daily more and more renewed; an old heart is a heart of ſtone, *Ezek.* 11. 19. and the hardneſs of it is not removed but by degrees. Now that which will ſink deep into a tender heart, a heart of fleſh, (*Ezek.* 36. 26.) will glide off from an old heart as water from a ſtone, without leaving any impreſſion: and where none is left, none can continue. The good ſeed which fell on ſtony ground, it ſprang up indeed, but it continued not, *it withered away as ſoon as it ſprang up*, Luk. 8. 6. but they which with an honeſt and good heart heard the word, they *kept it*, and brought forth fruit with patience (*i.e.* with perſeverance,) *ver.* 15. the fruitful influences of the word abode upon them: A good and honeſt heart not only hears the word, but keeps it; not only brings forth fruit, but perſiſts ſo doing. The more tender, humble, and ſpiritual the heart is, the more ſpiritual fruit and advantage doth it reap from the Ordinances, and the longer doth it continue in poſſeſſion of thoſe advantages; the leſs the ſoul is renewed, the more reſiſtance doth it offer to the Ordinances; and the more they are reſiſted, the weaker is their efficacy; and the leſs their efficacy is, the leſs while doth it coninue. A heart throughly ſanctified, is to the Ordinances like tinder, which ſoon takes fire, and is apt to keep it till it be forced out: whereas a carnal unmortified heart, is like green wood, whoſe moiſtneſs giving check to the activity of the fire, is not ſoon kindled, and will ſoon go out, if it be not well lookt to. Naturaliſts obſerve, that tranſmutation is eaſie in ſymbolical elements, ſuch as agree in ſome prime qualities: water is more eaſily turned into air than into fire. A holy and ſpiritual heart will be eaſily wrought on by holy and ſpiritual Ordinances; for here is an agreement in qualities; and the more agreement, the leſs oppoſition; and the leſs the oppoſition is, the more eaſily will it be maſtered; the power of the Ordinances will more eaſily both take place and keep poſſeſſion. Holineſs makes the ſoul both receptive and retentive of holy impreſſions. Make it but your great buſineſs to grow every day more holy, and it wil not be ſo hard a matter to have the Ordinances work effectually on you, or to have their efficacy continue with you.

2. Labour to be much affected with the Ordinances while you are im-

imployed in them. Slight impreſſions will be ſoon worn out: and weak influences will quickly ſpend themſelves and vaniſh. If the Ordinances have but little effect upon you, while you are under them, it is not like to laſt long; for that which is little, is near to nothing; and that which is ſo near to it, may ſoon come to nothing. It is not enough that your hearts be a little warmed, but they muſt burn within you (*Luke.* 24. 32.) while Chriſt is ſpeaking to you, or you are ſpeaking to him, if you would have that heavenly heat to be laſting. The good ſeed miſcarried upon one ſort of ground in the parable, becauſe it had no *deepneſs of earth*, Mat. 13. 5, 6. it *quickly withered becauſe it took no deep root.* If the Ordinances pierce no further than the ſurface of the ſoul; if the work of them be but ſuperficial; if they do not penetrate into the depths of the heart, the efficacy of them is not like to continue. Therefore prepare your hearts before you draw near to God; get them ſo diſpoſed as they may be capable of laſting influences. The Text directs us to this, O Lord keep this for ever in the imagination, &c. *and prepare their heart unto thee.* Then is the heart prepared to the Lord when it is made *tender*, and *ſenſible*, and *open*. Bring tender hearts to the Ordinances, get them broken up before-hand, break up your fallow ground, and ſow not among thorns, *Jer.* 4. 3. *Hoſ.* 10. 12. A tender heart drinks in divine influences, they inſinuate themſelves more eaſily into the intimate receſſes of it. That which can make no impreſſion at all upon a Flint, will ſink deep into ſoftned wax.

Come with *ſenſible* hearts, apprehenſive of your ſpiritual wants and neceſſities, burdened with your luſts and corruptions; pained with your inward diſtempers and ſoul-grievances. I cannot commend to you any thing more effectual, to make you capable of great and laſting advantages. Such a quick ſenſe of your ſpiritual condition will *open* your hearts, and make them ready to receive ſo much from the Ordinances, as will not be ſoon ſpent. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it, *Pſal.* 81. 10. Now it is deſire that opens the heart; and the ſtronger the deſire is, the wider is it opened: Then is the ſoul wide open, when it pants and breathes after God, when it hungers and thirſts after holineſs, as appears by equivalent promiſes, *Pſal.* 107. 9. *Matth.* 5. 6. Bleſſed are they who *hunger and thirſt* after righteouſneſs, *for they ſhall be filled.* That which we get by holy duties, is ſoon ſpent becauſe it is ſo little: and we get ſo little, becauſe we deſire no more. We come to the Ordinances *tanquam canis ad Nilum*, too like the Egyptian dog, which laps a little as he runs by the ſide of *Nilus*, but ſtays not to drink: we take but a taſte of them as *in tranſitu*, too little, and too curſorily; whenas Chriſt invites us to eat and drink abundantly, *Cant.* 5. 1. Such curſory taſts may chear you a little, but they will not furniſh you with ſtrength for continual ſervice: you muſt feed and feed hungrily, and come with a ſtrong appetite, that you may be capacious of much; a little will not ſerve you long.

3. Mind the Ordinances after your uſe of them; be much in meditation, if you would have the efficacy of Ordinances to continue long. Be often conſidering what you have heard, what you have prayed for, what you have

have received and are obliged to by the Sacraments. Much of Heaven and holineſs, is engraved on theſe Ordinances, and the ſeal is as it were ſet upon the heart, while you are under them: but after-conſideration lays more weight on it, and impreſſeth it deeper, and ſo makes the characters both more plain and more durable; for the deeper they are, the longer will it be ere they be defaced.

Moſt men loſe their ſouls, and the beſt men loſe great advantages for their ſouls, for want of conſideration. There is a quickning, a healing a comforting, a ſtrengthning virtue, in the Ordinances; and this vertue may fall upon your ſouls, while you are imployed in them: but you cannot expect it will ſtay with you, unleſs you fix it there; and no better way to fix it, than conſideration. This will rouze it up when it lyes dormant and unactive; this will put ſpirits into it, when it grows weak and languid; this will both diffuſe and faſten it, yea it will heighten and improve it. *My heart was hot within me* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 39. 3.); *while I was muſing, the fire burned.* The heart takes fire at the mind, and it is *muſing* or conſideration that kindles it, and keeps it in, and blows it up: thoſe ſparks which fall from heaven upon your hearts, while you are hearing, or praying, &c. they'l die, they will go out, and come to nothing unleſs you do ἀναζωπυρῶν, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6, unleſs you blow them up by meditation. *He ſent forth his word and healed them*, Pſal. 107. 20. The Word hath a ſalve for every ſoul-diſtemper; but that it may be effectual, the plaiſter muſt be laid on, and kept on too, till the cure be wrought; the Preacher may apply it, and lay it upon the diſtempered part, but it will not be kept on without meditation. *How ſweet are thy words unto my taſte?* ſaith *David*, Pſal. 119. 103. How came they to be ſtill ſo ſweet? why, *they were his meditation day and night*; the delicious reliſh of them ſtill continued, becauſe he kept them ſtill upon his palate, by ruminating and muſing on them.

The Word of God in the Scripture is as honey in the comb, there's that which is incomparably ſweeter: now by meditation you ſqueeze out this ſweetneſs, and it will be ſtill dropping comfort and ſweet refreſhment upon your ſouls, while you are *preſſing* it by conſideration. 1 *John* 2. 14, *I write unto you young men, becauſe ye are ſtrong, and the Word of God abideth in you.* If you would be ſtrong and continue ſo, the Word of God muſt *abide* in you; now how can it abide in you, if it have not leave to ſtay in that which is but the portal of the ſoul, if it abide not in your minds? You loſe all for want of conſideration; both the gracious and comforting influences of the Ordinances, ſlide from you through this neglect. And no wonder it is ſo great a damage to you, ſince it is ſo great a ſin; you caſt the Word behind your backs, and throw the Ordinances at your heels, when you do not mind them after you have done with them; and will the Lord encourage any with a durable bleſſing, under ſuch guilt? will not this provoke him rather to curſe your bleſſings, and blaſt them in the bud? Meditation is a known duty, and commonly inſiſted on, and therefore you may be tempted to ſleight it; whereas indeed upon this account, you ſhould the more regard it; for ſince it is a known

known duty, the neglect of it is a known ſin; now to ſay nothing how inconſiſtent it is either with grace or comfort, to live in a known ſin, how can you expect the efficacy of Ordinances ſhould be continued, while you neglect the means which the Lord hath appointed, and commended to you, as moſt effectual for the continuance thereof? The bleſſing of the Ordinances will not abide upon him, who contniues in ſin, eſpecially when his ſin is the neglect of that *medium* which ſhould fix the bleſſing upon him.

4. Let the efficacy of the Ordinances be purſued preſently into act: if they convince you of any neglected duty, fall immediately upon the practiſe of it. If they make you more reſolute againſt any carnal or worldly luſt, betake your ſelves preſently to the mortifying of it. If they kindle any holy affection to Chriſt or his people, give ſome real expreſſion thereof without delay. If they revive any languiſhing grace, let it be forthwith exerciſed. This was *Davids* practice, *Pſal.* 119. 60. you will find this one of the beſt expedients, for the fixing and ſecuring of thoſe good motions which are raiſed in your minds and hearts by the Ordinances. When the bloſſoms of a fruit-tree are once knit, though the flouriſh thereof be gone, and you ſee nothing but the bare rudiment of the expected fruit; yet you think it more ſecured from the injury of froſts and winds, than if it were ſtill in the flower; good motions when they are once reduced into act, are thereby as it were knit, and brought to more conſiſtency. They are then well paſt one of their critical periods, where moſt miſcarry, and ſo are more like to live and continue with you. Beſides the act ſtrengthens that good motion and diſpoſition which leads to it, and ſo makes you more ready for another act, and that diſpoſeth to more acts, and thoſe to better, and repeated acts beget a habit, and this (as the Philoſopher tells us) is μονιμώτερόν τι, ſomething that will ſtay by you. The hearts of the people being raiſed by *Hezekiahs* zealous ſpeech, 2 *Chron.* 29, they were kept up in that poſture, till the work deſigned by him was finiſhed (till Religion was reſtored and reformed); and how came this to paſs? Why, *the thing was done ſuddenly*, verſ. 36. he purſued the peoples good inclinations, and brought them into act ſuddenly; he ſtruck while the iron was hot. When your hearts are heated by the Ordinances, ſet immediately upon your work; the *primus impetus* affords a great advantage if it be improved; poſſibly in the vigor of it, you may overcome thoſe great difficulties and oppoſitions which have been too hard for you formerly, and may otherwiſe give you impediment hereafter; and this being maſtered, your progreſs will be eaſier, you may go on towards heaven under the power of the Ordinances, with leſs interruption and fewer interciſions of theſe divine influences, *Jam.* 1. 22. 23, *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own ſelves: for if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer; i. e.* if he do it not preſently (as appears by what follows) *he is like to a man beholding his natural face in a glaſs; for he beholdeth himſelf, and goeth his way, and ſtreightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.* The glaſs diſcovers what ſpots and ſullages are in his face, that he may waſh them off, or what is diſordered

dered about him, that he may correct and compose it; but if he do not this presently, if he put it off till some occurence divert him from the thoughts and remembrance of it, his looking in the mirror, will prove but a loss of time, a vain curiosity. Your use of the Ordinances is like to prove no better, if you practise not what they lead you to without delay; it's like to be no other, than such a viewing of your selves in a glass, a meer fruitless speculation.

5. You must take much pains with your hearts, if you would have them retain the vertue and efficacy of the Ordinances. The effect of them should be as a nail fastned in a sure place; but the heart is so hard and knotty a piece, that you cannot drive it in without many blows; it will require all your strength to force it in far enough; and all your care and watchfulness to keep it in when it is there. They grosly mistake Christianity, who take it to be consistent with our carnal ease and sloathfulness, who place it in notions or opinions, in fair shews, and a specious profession; in forms, gestures, or external observances, in conforming to this or that mode of Worship or Discipline. It were well for the world if one could be a Christian at such an easie rate: but they that please themselves with such conceits, they erre not knowing the Scriptures. The action of a Christian is all along in the New Testament, expressed by striving, wrestling, running and combating; exercises, wherein he that will not be worsted, must intend all his spirits, stretch all his sinews, put forth all his strength; he that is a Christian indeed, he must παλαιειν, *Eph.* 6. 12. Νικαν, *Phil.* 3. 12, 13, 14. *Heb.* 12. 14. ἀγωνιζεσθαι, *Luke.* 13. 24. his daily course must be a combating as for victory, a running as for a Crown, a striving as for life. The power and life of holiness can neither be attained, nor upheld, without an effectual use of the Ordinances; the Ordinances will never be effectual to purpose, unless the vertue of them abide upon the heart; now it meets with such reluctancy and opposition from the heart (so far as it is unrenewed) that it can never be fastned there without striving and strugling, and earnest contending; it must be done in despight of our own ease, and carnal humors, and natural inclination, and all the resistance of the body of death. If you think this too much, you think much to be Christians indeed, however you pretend to the name. Those that are acquainted with their own hearts, find it very hard to get them raised to a spiritual and heavenly temper, very difficult to get them pullied up (though they have the advantage of the most powerful Ordinances) to any good posture; and when with much ado they are got up, exceeding difficult to keep them there. Alas we seem to be forcing a weighty stone up a steep hill; when with much toyl we have got it near the top, take but our hands off a little, leave it but to it self, and down it runs further in a moment, than we can get it up again in some hours. Our way to heaven lyes up the hill, that which is spiritual and heavenly is above us, the natural bent and tendency of our hearts is downwards; as there is no getting them up without toyl and pains, so when we have raised them up a little, leave them but to themselves, grow but a little remiss and negligent, and down they run on a sudden, we shall quickly find them at the bottom of the hill, in a carnal,

nal, lukewarm earthly temper. When our hearts are effectually touched and raiſed, and moved in the uſe of Ordinances, there's no keeping them in a quick and lively motion, without ſtriving and ſtrugling, and as it were forcing them on with might and main. The influence of the Ordinances falling upon a ſloathful ſoul is quite loſt, and meerly thrown away upon it, *Prov.* 12. 27, *The ſloathful man roaſteth not that which he took in hunting.* So he loſeth all his former labour, becauſe he will not take a little more pains; a ſloathful ſoul loſeth all the advantages he gets by following the Ordinances, for want of care and induſtry to retain and improve what he hath gotten.

6. Comply with the Spirit of God. Theſe influences both as to the riſe and contiuance of them, are from him. When you comply not with him, you grieve the Spirit, and provoke him to withdraw; and when he withdraws, theſe influences will be diſcontinued. If you detain the truth in unrighteouſneſs, if you confine it to your minds, ſo as the power thereof deſcends not upon your hearts and affections, comes not forth in your lives and actions, you do κατεχειν impriſon the truth, and that is a great affront to the Spirit of Truth. If when the Spirit of God calls you to take up the Croſs, to leave all to follow Chriſt contentedly and cheerfully in a low reproached afflicted condition; or if when he calls you up to a higher degree of ſelf-denial, mortification, and holineſs; you hang back, or turn aſide, and refuſe to follow his conduct, this grieves the Spirit of holineſs. If you decline his inſtitution for other devices, ſhrink back from the work your are engaged to, when it grows hazardous; ſtrain your conſciences to ſecure your outward enjoyments, will not be influenced by him, further than is conſiſtent with your eaſe, credit, ſafety and worldly intereſt, you diſhonour the Spirit of wiſdom. This provokes the bleſſed Spirit to withdraw; and when the fire is gone, the heat will not long continue. If you refuſe to continue under the influences of the Spirit in ſome things, it's righteous with him not to continue them upon you in others. If you fear the diſpleaſure of man more than the grieving of him, if you lean more to the hopes of this life, than his ſupports, and conſult with fleſh and blood, inſtead of being directed by the wiſdom which is from above; it will be no wonder if he give you over to your own conduct, and intermitting his own, leave you under the influences of your carnal fears, and worldly hopes.

7. Be frequent in the uſe of Ordinances; good impreſſions do moſt uſually wear off in the intervals of holy duties; and the longer theſe are, the more danger there is: therefore make theſe interims as ſhort as may be, by quick returns to the Ordinances. It is obſerved, that places under the line are not ſo hot, as ſome climates at a further diſtance from it; and this reaſon is given for it, thoſe under the Equinoctial, though they have the Sun more vertical, and the beams falling perpendicularly, cauſe a more intenſe heat; yet the nights being of equal length with the dayes, the coolneſs of thoſe long nights doth more allay the heat, than where the nights are ſhorter. Long intermiſſions of holy duties are like long

nights, you may find them by experience to be great coolers; if you live under more powerful Ordinances, than ſome others, yet if they be more frequent and diligent in the uſe of what they have, they are like to have more ſpiritual warmth than you, and that with leſs allay and intermiſſion. Beſides when the advantage you have got by one Ordinance is declining and wearing off; the uſe of the ſame, or of ſome other, may revive and recover it, if you take it ſpeedily before it be too far gone. Further, a ſlight impreſſion, ſuch as is not like to laſt long, may be re-inforced for a longer continuance, if you lay your ſelves quickly under the inſtrument that firſt made it. When *Elijah* had once taſted of the proviſion the Lord made for him in the Wilderneſs, he *laid him down*, ſaith the Text, as having enough; but the Angel calls him to it again, for ſaith he, *The journey is too great for thee*, 1 King. 19. 6, 7. Hereupon he aroſe once more, and did eat and drink, and *went in the ſtrength of that meat forty days and forty nights*, verſ. 8. Once taſting will not ſerve your turn, a little will not be enough; ſo long a journey as yours is, will ſpend much; nothing but a frequent, and often repeated uſe of the Ordinances will furniſh you with ſuch ſtrength as will laſt you many dayes.

8. Finally, Look up to God for the continuance of this influence: pray, and pray in faith. Seek him, and depend on him for it, *He will be found of thoſe that ſeek him*, Matth. 7. 7. You have his promiſe for it, and dependance on him, obligeth him too; *the expectation of the poor ſhall not periſh*, Pſal. 9. 18. it is not for his honour to fail thoſe whom he hath incouraged to rely on him; an ingenuous man will not do it, much leſs the faithful God. This courſe *David* takes in the Text, he prays and encourageth his faith while he is praying, by that intereſt which the faithful have in the Lord by vertue of the Covenant, *O Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael our Fathers, keep this for ever*: yea the Lord himſelf leads us to this, *Deut.* 5. 24, 27, 29, the people were much affected, in that they had heard the Lords voice, *verſ.* 24, this brought them up to a noble reſolution, *verſ.* 27, *Speak thou unto us; All that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee; and we will hear it and do it.* Hereupon the Lord thus expreſſeth himſelf, *verſ.* 29, *O that there were ſuch a heart in them, that they would fear me and keep my Commandements always*, &c. What greater encouragement can we have to deſire this of God, than that he expreſſeth himſelf deſirous we ſhould have it? Faith is the main ſtrength of prayer: and the great ſupports of faith are theſe two, that *he is able*, and that *he is willing*. Theſe are to faith like the two pillars of the Temple, 1 *Kings* 7. 21. and the names of them (there expreſſed) are very appoſite. *He ſet up the right pillar, and called the name thereof Jachin*, i. e. he *will* eſtabliſh, *he is willing*; and *he ſet up the laſt pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz*, i. e. *in* him is ſtrength, *he is able*. Now faith hath both theſe pillars to ſupport it in this buſineſs; that the Lord is able to continue his influences, you will not queſtion, I hope: *He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think*,

think, according to the power which worketh in us, Ephes. 3. 20. and that *he is willing*, he puts it out of queſtion, when he uſeth ſuch an expreſſion, as amongſt men ſignifies a paſſionate deſire, O that there were ſuch a heart in them &c. now (ſaith the Philoſopher) ἐαν τις θέλῃ καὶ δυνῆται, &c. that which one is both able and willing to do, ſhall be done. Both reaſon and faith ſee ground enough to conclude this. Pray then, and pray believing, for as the Lord is able to it, ſo it is according to his will, and whatſoever you ask according to his will, believing, it ſhall be done, *Matth.* 21. 22.

Thus much for what you are to practice; there are ſome things to be avoided, if you would have the influence of the Ordinances to be laſting, theſe we ſhall comprize in four particulars.

Firſt, Take heed you perform not holy duties negligently; a heartleſs, formal, negligent attendance on the Ordinances, will be ſo far from procuring a durable bleſſing, that it will fix a curſe upon you, *Jer.* 48. 10, *Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord negligently*, ſee *Mal.* 1. 8, 14. If you invert the Apoſtles advice, 1 *Cor.* 7, and deal with the things of God, as you ſhould do with thoſe of the world. If you pray as though you prayed not, and hear as though you heard not, and uſe the ordinances as though you did not uſe them: they will be no otherwiſe effectual, than if there were no efficacy in them; it will continue on you as though it continued not; like that of the Sun in a Winter-day, which thaws the earth a little at noon, but ſo as it is harder frozen up the next night. Therefore let your hearts be ingaged in every holy duty, *Jer.* 30. 21, *Who is this that ingaged his heart to approach unto me?* You muſt hear as for life, *Deut.* 32. 46. 47, *Set your hearts unto all the words which I teſtifie among you this day*, &c. *For it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your life* &c. you muſt wreſtle in prayer, your hearts in this duty ſhould be as it were in a conflict, in an agony, συναγωνίσασθαι is the Apoſtles word, *Rom.* 15. 30, *Now I beſeech you brethren for the Lord Jeſus Chriſts ſake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye ſtrive together with me in your prayers to God for me.* Your prayers ſhould be ſuch as the other Apoſtle deſcribes, *James* 5. 16, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, the word rendred effectual fervent, is ἐνεργουμένη. Now ἐνεργούμενος is one poſſeſſed with a ſpirit, and acted by it. If the word here uſed look that way, then ſuitable to the matter to which it is applied, it imports a poſſeſſion in a good ſenſe. And δέησις ἐνεργουμένη, will be a prayer full of the holy Ghoſt, wherein that bleſſed Spirit is operative, exerting its force and *energy*. Such a prayer as ſhews the ſoul to be poſſeſſed of the holy Spirit, and acted by it, ſo as all the powers of that ſoul are ſet a work and put upon motion towards God *effectually*. Such a prayer *avails much*, procures great advantages, and of long continuance.

Generally in all holy Ordinances your ſouls ſhould ſtretch out themſelves to reach the Lord; they ſhould ſpring up to him in acts of love and deſire, and claſp about him with delight and complacence, and lay hold on him with an humble and filial confidence, and ſtir up themſelves

to lay hold on him. We do all fade as a leaf, ſaith the Church, *Iſa.* 64. 6. (both their perſons and their righteouſneſs did ſo) and the reaſon thereof follows *ver.* 7, *There is none that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold on thee.*

Secondly, Beware of the world, meddle not with it more than needs muſt; and when it is needful; ingage not therein, but with fear, caution and vigilance. Carry your ſelves amongſt worldly objects and employments, as though you were amongſt cheats and thieves: they have the art to pick your heart ſlily, and to rob them of that which is more precious than Gold, when you little think of it.

Let not your minds and hearts plunge themſelves in the world: nothing ſooner, nothing oftner extinguiſheth divine influences, than this puddle. The cares, and delights, and employments of the world, when they are immoderate or unſeaſonable, *they choak* the Word, *Matt.* 13.22. they ſtifle the iſſue of holy Ordinances, ſo as it becomes like the untimely birth of a woman.

When your hearts are warmed in holy duties, you ſhould be as cautious and wary how you venture into the world, as you are of going into the froſty air, when you are all in a ſweat. What is kindled by the word of Prayer, *&c.* how quickly is it puft out by the world, when you ruſh into it unwarily? it requires as much care to keep it in, as to keep a Candle in, when you would carry it through the open air in a rainy bluſtring night. The further you are above the world, the longer may you retain any ſpiritual impreſſions. Geographers write of ſome Mountains whoſe tops are above the middle Region of the Air; and there lines and figures being drawn in the duſt, have been found (ſay they) in the ſame form and order, untouched, undefaced a long time after: and the reaſon is, becauſe they are above thoſe winds, and ſhowres, and ſtorms, which ſoon wear out, and efface any ſuch draughts in this lower Region: The lower your minds, and hearts, and converſations are, the more in the hurry of this boyſterous world, the leſs will any thing that is heavenly and ſpiritual abide upon them. Let the ſoul be brought into never ſo good order, by the help of holy duties: yet a little unwary ingaging in earthly buſineſs will ruffle, diſturb and quite diſcompoſe it.

When your ſouls are by power of the Ordinances ſet on motion towards Chriſt and Heaven; if you would hold on in a continued courſe, you muſt be ware of worldlineſs, and keep free as much as may be from earthly incumbrances, and intanglement: *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us,* Heb. 12. 1. Let us perſevere, and hold out in that gracious and heavenly courſe which the Goſpel hath put us on: but that this may be done, one great impediment muſt be removed, *The ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet us muſt be ſhaken off.* Now that ſin, as ſome Expoſitors conceive, is worldlineſs, and it is probable; for περίστασις, being a circumſtance ἁμαρτία, ἐυπερίστατος; if we render it literally, is the ſin that hath goodly circumſtances. And no ſin ſets off it ſelf with more goodly circumſtances than worldlineſs; no ſin hath more ſpecious pleas and pretences to excuſe, vindicate, and juſtifie it ſelf. No ſin hath more fig-leaves to cover its nakedneſs, and to ſhrowd it from diſcovery and conviction, than worldlineſs. This muſt be ſhaken off; it is the great defacer of heavenly impreſſions, the chief interrupter of holy motions: if you would

would hold on when the *impetus* which is impreſt on you by any Ordinance, hath ſet you a going; beware of the world, beware of worldlineſs.

Thirdly, Take heed of any inordinacy in affection, inclination, or deſign. Such inordinacies give the heart a ſtrong bias; holy duties check it but a little, give it but as it were a ſmall rub: when this is once paſt over, it will hold on in that courſe to which it is moſt ſwayed. The Miniſtry of *John Baptiſt* had ſome influence upon *Herod*, *He heard John gladly, and did many things*, Mark. 6. 20. but ſenſuality being predominant, thoſe better inclinations were quite overpowred. The word had ſome effect upon *Simon Magus*, *He believed*, Act. 8. 13, and being taken for a believer *was baptized, and* afterwards *continued with Philip*, &c. but a ſtrong affection of vain-glory ſuppreſſed thoſe better motions, and the worſt got upmoſt. Take heed of any inordinacy as to lawful things; your relations, ſtudies, ordinary callings, *&c.* this will not ſuffer you to come ſo often to holy duties, to ſtay ſo long in them, or to be ſo intent upon them, as is requiſite for the deep impreſſing of their efficacy: and after they are done, this will hurry your ſouls from under thoſe thoughts and exerciſes, which ſhould fix and ſettle their virtue and influence upon your minds and hearts. Natural bodies follow the tendency of that element which is predominant in them; a ſtone moves downwards, it would be at the centre; that which ſtops it, offers it violence; and when the force is removed, down it falls freely: Juſt thus doth the heart follow the tendency of theſe inordinacies; if it meet with a ſtop in an Ordinance, that's but an ungrateful violence to it, it will ſtruggle to break through it, will be reſtleſs till the force be removed, till the power of the Ordinance be ſhaken off, which checks an inclination natural and acceptable to it; and what hopes in this caſe, that the efficacy of any holy duty will long continue?

Fourthly, Reſt not in the beſt performance of any duty, nor in any aſſiſtances you find therein, though they be ſpecial and more than ordinary. If this ſatisfie and exalt you, you will be apt to grow ſecure and careleſs, not looking to the improvement of Ordinances when once they are over, and that's the way to loſe all. We are apt to take moſt dangerous colds, when we are in the greateſt heats. And it's obſerved, that ſome profeſſors have had the fouleſt falls, after they have been moſt elevated in holy employments. The reſting upon the *opus operatum*, the meer outward performance of a duty, when the heart is not ingaged therein, is an open pit, which none fall into, ſave thoſe that are blind: but the reſting upon the *opus operantis*, a duty affectionately performed, is a more ſecret, and ſo a more dangerous ſnare. He that makes account he hath done enough becauſe he hath done well, may be apt to think he is not obliged to look further after it: and ſo the continued influence of the duty upon his heart and life, which is indeed the principal advantage of it, may be neglected, and conſequently loſt for want of looking to.

To conclude, Make not the Ordinances your end, but uſe them as the means to attain it. They are not injoyned us for themſelves, but in order to ſomething more deſirable; their end is ſomething further than their uſe. Take heed you place not all your Religion in hearing, praying, communicating, *&c.*,

neither

neither count your ſelves religious enough, becauſe you are much and often in theſe duties: This is to make them your end, and then you will reſt therein, without proceeding further (for the motion of the Agent is terminated in his end): and ſo you will ſtay ſhort of that for which they were principally intended, *viz.* the keeping of your hearts and minds in a ſetled poſture of holineſs and righteouſneſs: and neglect that, by which this main end of the Ordinances is only to be attained, *viz.* the continuing of their influence upon you.

So much for the caſe propounded, which I have indeavoured to reſolve (as the nature of it requires) practically: and therefore as there is no time for, ſo there will be leſs need of Application. But that I may not diſmiſs you without ſomething of this nature, having laid your duty before you in the Obſervation, and ſhewed you how it may be performed in ſatisfying the caſe: Let me now preſs you to the performance of it by one Conſideration, which will have the force of a Motive where there is any ſenſe of ſoul-concernments.

If the efficacy of the Ordinances abide not on you, you cannot be fruitful under them, at leaſt you cannot *bring forth fruit unto perfection*, (as the expreſſion is *Luke* 8, 14.) you may bring forth buds, or leaves, or bloſſoms, *&c.* but if their influence continue not, that which you bring forth will never come to ripeneſs and *perfection*; it will be crude and ſowre at beſt, and ſowre Grapes are as bad as no fruit in the Lords account: and unfruitfulneſs will provoke the Lord to deprive you of the Goſpel and Ordinances, *Iſaiah* 5. 2, 6, *Ye looked that it ſhould bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes.——And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof.——I will lay it waſte that it ſhall not be pruned nor digged.——I will alſo command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The meaning of this parable (ſo far as concerns our purpoſe) is expreſſed by another threatning denounced for the ſame ſin, *Matth.* 21. 43, *The Kingdom, of God* (*i. e.* the Goſpel of the Kingdom) *ſhall be taken from you, and given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof.* And Chriſts threatning of *Epheſus* amounts to as much, *Rev.* 2. 4, 5, *Nevertheleſs I have ſomething againſt thee, becauſe thou haſt left thy firſt love.* The firſt impreſſions of the Goſpel were worn off and vaniſhed. And what follows, *I will come againſt thee quickly, and remove thy Candleſtick out of its place, unleſs thou repent.* So that this ſin will pull up your hedge, and break down your wall, level all your ſecurities; and ſo lay you open to the boar of the wood, and the wild beaſts of the field: ſuch as inſtead of digging and pruning you, will devour and lay you waſte, and *Sharon* will become a deſert. This ſin will provoke Chriſt to let the Stars fall out of his right hand: ſo as you will be left to periſh for want of viſion. This ſin will provoke the Lord to take the Goſpel of the Kingdom from you: and leave you under the helliſh influences of the Prince of darkneſs. This ſin will overturn your Candleſticks, and extinguiſh your lights, and leave you nothing but the ſnuffs. This ſin will deliver your ſtrength into captivity, and your glory into the enemies hand. This ſin will ſmite the ſhepherds and ſcatter the flock, and lay the heritage

of

of God deſolate. This ſin will cauſe your Sun to ſet at noon, and turn the day of your gracious viſitation, into a ſad and diſmal night. This ſin will turn the place which hath been a valley of viſion, into a ſeat of darkneſs, and a *valley of the ſhadow of death.*

If then you would avoid a judgment, which ſtrikes not only at your eſtates and lives, but at your ſouls: if you would prevent that dreadful ſtroke, which may not only reach your ſelves, but your poſterity, your children and childrens children; if you would not have them and your ſelves, and thouſands and millions with you, bereaved of the Goſpel, and the means of grace and life, take all care and pains that the influences of the Ordinances do not ſlide from you, that they be not as water ſpilt upon the ground. Be faithful and diligent in the uſe of the forementioned directions, and all other means which may be effectual to fix them. And if hereby your hearts are wrought up to ſuch a reſolution, *The Lord God of Abraham, Iſaac and Iſrael, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of your hearts.*

FINIS.

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